COMMENTARY

ISRAEL WATCHES AND WAITS

And Keeps Its Powder Dry

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JERUSALEM

WHEN Ben Gurion rejected an opposition request for a Knesset debate on foreign policy early in September, with the explanation that so far as Israel was concerned nothing had happened to make her reformulate her policies, he expressed one of the underlying assumptions of Israel's present approach to foreign affairs: that the only permanent feature in Arab political life is its instability.

At the time of writing—the ubiquitous qualification in Middle Eastern political commentary—Israel is enjoying the calm to the full. With the British in Jordan, the Americans in the Lebanon, the UN in Gaza, and the Arabs engaged in recriminations, bloodletting, and mass trials for the most unlikely conspiracies, the borders are as quiet as they are ever likely to be. But no one here is prepared to act on the assumption that the present constellation will remain. A few bursts of machine-gun fire in one of the Arab capitals, another *crise de conscience* in the White House, a new Russian weapon, and the present unstable equilibrium would be upset. The progress in Israeli political attitudes, however, is gratifying, in the light of the myths prevalent here a few years ago. Ten years, after all, is a fairly short time for liberals and socialists to learn the facts of life regarding world affairs, as a glance at Britain will show.

When the State of Israel was established, the assumptions underlying its foreign policy were fairly straightforward Second International mythology. It was assumed that Israel would be able to remain neutral and "non-identified" if she really tried hard enough; that the 1949 armistice agreements with the Arabs would as a matter of course develop into peace treaties, "normalization" (whatever that may mean in the Middle East), and later on into brotherly cooperation, if need be with the help of a little pressure by the great powers. Israel would then become a bridge between Europe and the Middle East, between East and West, and a kind of out-patients' department for dispensing Western culture and technical progress to the region in suitable doses. It was also assumed that Arab hostility to Israel was based either on pure misunderstanding,

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WITH the Arab world split into pro-Nasser and anti-Nasser camps, Israel's policy remains one of watchful waiting and reliance upon adequate defensive strength. The political and military balance of power is here discussed by A. V. SHERMAN, an experienced political observer and an author of sociological studies on Arab nationalism. Born in London and for the past six years resident in Israel, Mr. Sherman has had firsthand knowledge of Israel's military establishment. He contributed "The Social Roots of Nasser's Egypt" to the November 1957 COMMENTARY.

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which would be dispelled by patient explanation, or on anti-Israel incitement by "feudal lords," "reactionaries," and the like, who hoped in this way to divert the stream of popular wrath from the struggle for freedom, economic progress, and international brotherhood. With the inevitable progress of socialism, trade unionism, enlightenment, etc., in the Arab countries, the hand of fraternal friendship would surely be grasped. But as the modern "anti-imperialist," "socialist," and "anti-feudal" movements gained power, hostility to Israel grew both in intensity and in effectiveness, and the old-style "feudal" Arab seemed affectionate by comparison. Meanwhile the Soviet government, undeterred by Israel's desperate efforts at "non-identification," began to harass both her and her co-religionists inside the Soviet Union. The results of Israel's efforts to appeal from time to time to the "world's conscience" at last led her to question whether such an institution really exists.

The beginning of Soviet military aid to Nasser in 1955, and the American government's refusal to allow Israel to purchase modern arms to meet the implied threat, finally destroyed the belief that foreign policies are based on justice, and paved the way to a tacit reformulation of policies, based on four main assumptions: first, that the status quo in the region, including Israel's present frontiers, is extremely unstable and likely to be so for a long time yet; secondly, that Israel must at all times be prepared to face an attack by all the Arab armies combined and that her foreign policy must therefore be oriented first and foremost to insuring an adequate supply of arms and equipment sufficient not only to beat off such an attack but to launch punishing counter-offensives; thirdly, that Israel must develop closer ties with the non-Arab countries in the region; and lastly, that there will always be anti-Nasser groups in NATO, in particular among military circles, prepared to see Israel either as a more reliable partner in the region, or at least as a counter-weight to Nasser: and that it will be possible to find help from such groups.

SHORTLY before the Sinai campaign Nasser had come close to establishing a joint Arab command to undertake military operations against Israel. The subsequent vicissitudes of Arab political life have brought Iraq into his sphere of influence, while putting Jordan out of his reach. Thus at present there is an equilibrium inside the Arab world between pro-Nasser and anti-Nasser forces, which reflects not only their own intrinsic strength but the degree of involvement of the great powers, the uncommitted nations at the UN, and indeed the whole balance of power in the world. This sensitivity of the Middle East to marginal changes in world politics was evinced most clearly at the special General Assembly of the United Nations held during the second and third weeks of August.

It was the belief of the Arabs that President Eisenhower lacked the will or the means to honor the Eisenhower Doctrine, and that the Soviet-Nasserist bloc was the safest side to back. This conviction helped produce a situation where the pro-Western Lebanese and Jordan governments had been seriously undermined and were expected to be overthrown by a combination of internal and external Nasserist attack. The Anglo-American landings, which were spurred by the sudden fall of the Iraqi government, temporarily saved them, but then the landings themselves came under heavy political attack, not only from Nasserist-Soviet sources, but from many quarters inside Britain and the U.S.A. At one time it appeared that the British and American forces would be withdrawn, in which case the Lebanese and Jordan governments would certainly have toppled over. At (and before) the General Assembly, however, a different picture emerged. The large measure of support for the Anglo-American landings not only proved a setback for the Soviet-Nasser bloc, and made the pro-Nasser Jeremiahs in the West look ridiculous, but even surprised the British and American governments themselves. It was indeed a long time since the Anglo-Saxon powers had been so popular. Besides the Jordanian and Lebanese gov-

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ernments, Libya, Tunisia, and the Sudan—all of whom fear Nasserist intervention—supported the landings; so naturally did Turkey, Persia, and Pakistan. Other Afro-Asian powers, like Ghana, were benevolent. In view of this line-up, Nehru, who in any case is facing trouble at home, was far less shrill than usual. In the end, the Arab League resolution, unanimously proclaimed by the Assembly, formalized Nasser's setback, and agreed in effect that Anglo-American forces could stay in Jordan and the Lebanon so long as the governments they had come to protect wished them to stay. Not surprisingly, the League's political committee failed to discuss the question: its constitution, which gives every member the power of veto, is an excellent instrument for preventing any action.

The present line-up in the Arab world is as follows: The UAR is backed by Iraq and the Algerian rebel leadership. The ruling dynasty of Yemen has now become a Nasserist satellite, and an enthusiastic convert to the struggle against "corruption and despotism"—outside the Yemen of course—but apart from their vote, and the excuse they give for intervention in the Hadramaut and Aden, the Yemenites are hardly much of an asset. Saudia and Morocco support Nasser up to a point, but he can never be too sure of them. The anti-Nasser group includes the Lebanon and Tunisia—the two most democratic, socially and economically progressive of Arab states, whatever that may be worth—Jordan, Sudan, and Libya, with moral support from the three Moslem powers of the northern tier, Turkey, Persia, Pakistan. Both Libya and the Sudan were under powerful Egyptian pressure before the Nasser regime was installed. Various Wafd and non-Wafd governments in Egypt had been encouraging and subsidizing the anti-British pro-Egyptian movement in Libya. As far as the Sudan is concerned, Cairo wishes to control the Nile waters and appropriate a maximum for her own needs; for many years, too, there has been talk in Egypt of settling some of the surplus agricultural population from Upper Egypt in the Sudan. Acquisition of the Sudan, moreover, would provide governorships and bureaucratic "outdoor relief" for Egypt's surplus white-collar population. The Sudanese government, on the other hand, needs its land and water for its own increasing population, its white-collar jobs for its own white-collar class, and its ministerial jobs for itself. It is therefore in favor of international or foreign guarantees of one sort or another that Nasser will not be allowed to invade or cause trouble in other Arab states, as he has been doing of late.

Yet so long as the anti-Nasser coalition in the Arab world is dependent on strong nerves in the White House and a favorable international constellation, Israel's political and defense chiefs have to give their main attention to what might happen if the wind veered a few points to the East, and allowed Nasser to take over the whole ramshackle structure. One thing at least is certain: the social, political, and economic weakness of the Middle East makes every Arab country look for patrons abroad, and under present conditions this means one or other of the blocs which alone can supply modern arms and economic aid.

If Nasser could lay his hands on Jordan, the way would be clear for him to set about redeeming his promise to emulate Saladin and reconquer Palestine for the Arabs. He needs the conquest of Palestine in order to cement his grip on power for several reasons: the main justification of the 1952 revolution was that Farouk and the Wafd had failed in the first Palestine war; also, without Palestine he has no land bridge to the "fertile crescent," and indeed, with Beirut closed to him, his only communications are through the Syrian port of Latakia, by air, or the long sea journey to Basrah.

An Arab commander-in-chief—controlling the Egyptian, Syrian, Iraqi, and Jordan forces—would have at his disposal about ten infantry and three armored divisions, some fifteen jet-fighter squadrons and two jet-bomber wings, half a dozen destroyers and ten submarines, together with the usual sup-

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porting arms, artillery (including self-propelled guns), small arms, minelayers, motor-torpedo boats, etc., etc. The Arab armies are unusually well supplied with heavy tanks and jet planes, to compensate for their inadequate maintenance. They now have close on 500 Soviet T-34 tanks, 80 Stalin Mk.-3's, 80 Pattons and 150 British Centurions, together with several hundred jet fighters, mainly MIG 17's, Vampires, and Sabres, and 50 Ilyushin jet bombers. This alone is well over a billion dollars worth of arms and auxiliary equipment. (The total includes Saudian equipment, which is mostly still in packing cases, but could be shipped to the UAR when needed.) Assuming that up to two-thirds of these forces could be deployed against Israel—leaving the rest to keep order in the rear, watch the other frontiers, and stand by in case of Israeli paratroop or naval landings—Israel would have to be prepared to face an attack by some half a dozen infantry and two armored divisions, backed by the larger part of the Arab air force, naval support (mainly attacks on shipping, tip-and-run bombardments, small commando landings) and squads of *fedayeen* (suicide commandos). There are ample invasion routes for forces of this size.

To create forces of more or less similar magnitude, Israel has developed the reserve army system. This, briefly, is based on civilian manpower drawn from universal "reserve-conscription" and permanently organized into units and formations, with headquarters and support troops, which can be mobilized and concentrated within a matter of hours; the standing army of conscripts with a regular cadre exists primarily to train and organize the reserves, to produce trained replacements for the latter, and help provide a screen behind which they could be mobilized and deployed; there is a women's service to release a maximum number of men for fighting units; the standing army constitutes a screen, based—in addition to the regular formations—on frontier settlements, the air-striking force, and intelligence. The object of the screen is to give the reserves time to mobilize, equip, and deploy. All Israeli residents up to the age of about fifty are liable for service in the reserves, and the main fighting units are based on those among the lower age groups who saw service in the standing army, while the higher age groups serve mainly in service and auxiliary units, area defense, staff and administrative posts. Israeli population statistics show about a quarter of a millon Jewish males in the twenty-forty age groups (above forty the numbers of reservists fall off rapidly). When allowance is made for the medically unfit, essential services, etc., this gives some idea of the order of magnitude of the reserve army. Unmarried and childless women are liable for reserve duty up to their early thirties, but with the average age of marriage at twenty-two, their number dwindles rapidly above the early twenties.

Conscription is in force for males from the ages of seventeen and one half to twenty-nine, and for unmarried women from seventeen and one half to twenty-seven. An unusually high proportion of men in each age group is mobilized; the remainder consists mainly of medical rejects and those whose call-up is deferred for study purposes. This latter group includes members of extreme religious groups who are permanently deferred on the grounds that they continue to study the Law all their lives. The majority of Orthodox and observant Jews, of course, serve as officers and other ranks with the same measure of devotion as their less religious comrades. There are quite a few in the paratrooper units, and in general there is no religious problem in the army. New immigrants of up to twenty-nine are conscripted, and a trickle of those whose service was deferred help make up the number. The proportion of women called up is considerably smaller, since many girls claim exemption on religious grounds, a privilege extracted by the clericalist parties (though by no means all religious girls claim exemption and not all those who exploit the provision are religious). The rest include those who are already married, nurses and other essential workers, and those who obtain de-

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ferment for further study. The army does not always call up girls who lack the necessary educational qualifications, intelligence, or knowledge of Hebrew required for technical and administrative posts, and those whose cultural level and home background may cause them difficulty in fitting into army life. This includes new immigrants from Islamic countries in particular. There are two conflicting considerations at work here. From the point of view of the army, such girls mean more expense and trouble than they are worth, and since they will marry and have children shortly after demobilization, and will therefore be exempted from reserve duties, they are not worth the "investment" put into male conscripts from backward countries in the form of education and training, on the grounds that their value as reservists will grow as they become more "Israelized" in the course of their civilian life. On the other hand, since the girls will be mothers of a future generation of soldiers (and the birth rate of these groups is usually high), one influential school of thought considers that the educational benefits they derive from their service justifies conscripting them, even if the army does not always gain so much from their services.

As in all armies, the tone is set by the officer corps, which can be divided into four main categories. The senior officers acquired their military experience before the Palestine war, in the Haganah, or British and other foreign armies; they later built up the defense forces as they went along. Most of them now have the best part of twenty years military activity behind them, from illegal training activities to command of formations. The medium ranks consist mainly of officers who joined the army during or after the Palestine war of 1948 and stayed on to make it their career. The subalterns are mainly conscripts who were commissioned during the course of their service. The reserve officers may belong to any one of the three categories.

The need for a large number of officers to man the conscript and reserve units, as well as the country's equalitarian outlook, insures fair consideration to all potential officer material irrespective of economic or educational background. Most of the young officers were born or brought up in the country and had a high school education of some sort. (This includes members of the kibbutzim and veteran agricultural settlements, all of whom attend school until call-up age, though the higher age groups do agricultural work into the bargain. The agricultural schools also account for a fairly high proportion of officer-cadets, as they have always done.) About half of the young officers in one large sample came from veteran agricultural settlements. Officer-cadets are chosen after a period of service in the ranks and have to do well in the NCO's battle-course. In spite of severe selectivity, a substantial number are rejected during the tough officers' course.

There are no statistics available on what proportion of officers are of Oriental origin, a question which is so often asked. For one thing, ethnic or communal origin of soldiers, as distinct from their place of birth, is not recorded on their documents. Furthermore, no one is quite sure how to define "Oriental" and "European," where to include Sephardi Jews from Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, and how to deal with children of "mixed" marriages—which make up some 12 per cent of all marriages. Yet a rough check in an officers' training school and one or two units showed that a growing number of cadets and officers were of Oriental origin. When one takes into account the high proportion of new immigrants from Oriental countries who did not receive schooling in Israel (or received none at all anywhere) and the fairly low proportion who continued their education after leaving elementary school, the present arrangement seems very reasonable. In fact there has been a tendency, encouraged by Ben Gurion, to press for increasing the number of officers from Oriental families wherever possible.

The feeling that commissions are given to those who are most fitted to hold them is an important constituent of morale in an

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equalitarian country like Israel. On the whole, officers live very modestly—their salaries are linked to civil service scales, though they work a good deal harder. Regular officers serve on short-term contracts which are not renewed unless the officers live up to expectations and develop in accordance to their growing seniority and rank. The high demands on officers, and the success of the higher command, especially in the Sinai campaign, has helped produce that mutual confidence between ranks at all levels which has provided the main basis for military morale. Civilian morale, in the sense of a belief in the justice or necessity of the army's aims, is also present to a very high degree. Communists apart, there are very few who question the overwhelming importance of military preparedness against Arab attack. There are several indications of the high level of Israeli morale, besides the actual success in the Sinai campaign: the low number of desertions and the satisfactory turn-out for reserve duty; the large numbers of officers and men who turned up at their units during the Sinai campaign without being called up, and refused to take no for an answer; the fact that all units, down to the smallest, actually went into attack under fire when they were ordered to, is the best indication of effective morale. That most men look forward to their annual service in the reserves is a well-known fact, whatever its explanation.

Since Israel can manufacture only small arms, its heavy armaments are very much the same as the Arabs. It has better and more up-to-date jets, though far less of them; at the time of writing its standard tank, the Sherman with a 75 mm gun mounted on it, is out-gunned as well as being less heavily armored than the Stalins, T-34's, Pattons, and Centurions of the Arabs. It lacks submarines, and has less of almost everything than the Arabs. This situation is now expected to change for the better. Ben Gurion recently stated that Israel's efforts to obtain newer arms have been meeting considerable though not complete success; the U.S. government has announced that the sale of certain defensive arms is now going on. Some of the weak spots, therefore, are being seen to; though the cost, direct and indirect, is high.

In spite of their inferiority in numbers and equipment, the Israeli defense chiefs are confident that they could defeat a combined Arab attack, and mount a counter-offensive within a few days which would be capable of capturing vital enemy centers. Their appreciation is based on the experience of the Sinai campaign and the usual sources on which defense staffs base their work. As they see it, the great weakness of the Arab armies lies in their officer corps. Whatever the impression of dynamism and virility which Egyptian, Syrian, and Iraqi officer-politicians may make on visitors from abroad (e.g., "friends of the Middle East," or British Labor MP's, and old ladies of both sexes), they make a poor showing where military leadership and powers of command are concerned. Most of them are politicans first and soldiers second. Senior officers of Arab armies have always spent more time playing at politics than insuring that the formations under their command were engaged in training and exercises, that the men were being looked after, and that their junior officers were made to stay with their units. Army life is strenuous and nasty at the best: the weather is too hot or too cold or too wet; desert and mountains are equally unpleasant, cultivated land even more so. It is so much easier to sit in the shade and turn commanding into a business of reading and writing reports—or go to town and visit friends for a chat on politics—than to visit units, and force the officers to train their men and themselves.

If this situation was grim enough for the Arabs during the years which led up to the Palestine war in 1948 (when officers not only proved incapable of commanding their units and formations but very often did not even try and deserted when things went bad) it has deteriorated still further since the "rising young forces" took over. If it was formerly the prerogative of officers from

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the rank of colonel and above to play at politics, they now begin from the rank of lieutenant. Cairo has an irresistible attraction for the Egyptian officers; they come there to intercede for relatives and friends, to do business, to find out if any new enterprise is interested in acquiring them as a partner—officers are worth having nowadays —or just to feel important. As for the Syrian army, it has undergone so many purges during recent years that it has neglected training; it has based promotions on political criteria to such an extent that even the Egyptian high command was appalled by the quality of the senior officers that it found when unification of the armies was begun. In Jordan, the Arab Legion, which was formerly the best of the Arab armies, has undergone three serious purges and many minor ones during the past few years: after 1951, in 1957 when pro-British officers were purged, and again in 1958 when pro-Nasserists were purged in turn. Captains and lieutenants of a couple of years ago are now colonels and brigadiers, without having acquired either the knowledge or the experience required for their new appointments. Training and maneuvers have suffered owing to the army's use for internal security purposes and its politicization.

Historically speaking there are two kinds of officer corps which can provide adequate leadership in a modern army. One kind is based on aristocratic families with a long tradition of military service to their country, a sense of duty and loyalty. The other is the kind of officer corps in a democratic or revolutionary army where the officers either grow up with the army in the course of battle, or are chosen from among the recruits on the basis of qualities of leadership, determination, ability, and courage. The Arab armies belong to neither of these two categories. The majority of their officer corps originates from lower-middle-class families, whose sons after finishing secondary school are attracted by the army as a career because training at the military academy is free, and is only a year and a half as against three or four at the university, and where a secure career awaits them, providing that they are not so hopeless as to be expelled from the course. (The Jordanian army was tougher on its officers, hence their dislike of Glubb.) Under Farouk the officers in Egypt led an easy life, which gave them plenty of time to talk politics; since then they have had an even easier one, with higher prestige, more "public appearances," and a "political" atmosphere which makes senior officers reluctant to make enemies of men under their command by disciplining them, in view of the fact that they might need their support at some future date.

Another factor which undermines discipline in the Arab armies is the widespread homosexuality rife in these countries. Whatever the ethical and social problem of homosexual relations between consenting adult civilians, they have a ruinous effect on discipline in Arab armies, where officers and NCO's exploit their soldiers for this purpose, and where such relations can exist between officers of different rank in the same unit. A substantial proportion of Arab soldiers who deserted to the Israeli forces during "peacetime" did so because their commander or NCO was pressing homosexual attentions on them, and they found no other way of escaping them. (This, furthermore, tells us something about the state of the army in general.)

Armies can never be better than the personal character of their officers permits. An article by an Egyptian secondary school teacher in the Cairo daily *Al-Gumhuriya* last November complained that cheating is prevalent in schools and in all walks of life, and that not only is there no moral opprobrium attached to it, but that no effort is made to stop it. Now one of the great weaknesses of the Egyptian and Syrian armies is that Egyptian officers quite uninhibitedly hand up misleading reports about their units, the state of their training, fortifications, and even battles. Since the recipients are loath to visit the units (especially when the enemy is near, or the *khamseen* is blowing) they pass the infor-

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mation in their hands on upwards, often with additional embellishments of their own. As a result GHQ is never quite sure of what is going on, in peace or war. Both the British and German training missions with the Egyptians (and with the Syrians too in the latter case) complained about this habit, but found that there was nothing they could do about it. Parallel with the habit of deception from lower to higher levels there is misleading propaganda from the top downwards. For the past few years the Egyptian high command has been misleading its own officers (not to mention the public) about the comparative strength of Egypt and Israel. Military lecturers have been sent round to Egyptian and foreign armies to prove that the Egyptian army defeated the Israelis during the Sinai campaign, and were subsequently forced to retreat by the British and French. Some officers cannot help knowing from their own experience how false this Arabian Nights propaganda is; others, on the contrary, have been known to ask: "If we are so strong, what are we waiting for?" Such things inevitably undermine the confidence of officers in the higher command.

Contrary to what had been expected, the battle morale of the "revolutionary" armies is no better than it was before the revolution. The Egyptian peasant, who still provides the army with its rank and file, is the same as he ever was: ignorant and apathetic. A few have received land in the reform, or may know someone who received land; the regime talks about improving conditions for the common soldier and improving relations between the ranks, but the flush of good intentions passed without anything more effective than pep-talks which went well above the soldiers' heads in most cases. Until the officers and soldiers themselves change, relations between them will remain pretty much the same. But to change the Egyptian soldier means first of all changing economic, social, sanitary, and educational conditions in the Egyptian countryside from top to bottom. Then the right sort of recruit would come, in another couple of decades. However, such changes would require enormous expenditure, and meanwhile the money is going into war and politics instead. But then, were the regime to engage in such policies, it would hardly need an army at all; it would have good relations with the whole world for the asking. (The Syrian peasant is healthier and naturally a better soldier than the Egyptian, but his officers are a poor lot.)

There has been a good deal of talk about inducting the bulk of the educated classes into the army; the result should be interesting. If the Nasser regime's pep-talks and morale pamphlets (whose style owes something to Communist propaganda) are above the heads of the rank and file, they often do more harm than good where the NCO's and officers are concerned. They present war as a heroic affair, where the soldiers would march forward in serried ranks with bands and banners, overrun the cowardly Jews in one dramatic battle, and then march back home again like heroes, with nothing worse than a few bandages to show, to the plaudits of the population. From interrogation of prisoners taken during the Sinai campaign it transpires that the difference between this picture—which was firmly implanted into their consciousness—and the noise, chaos, tension, surprise, heat, and general nastiness of battle, helped cause a collapse of morale.

OWING to the low level of leadership, energy, discipline, and training in the Arab armies, their abundance of armaments and numerical superiority are less terrifying than would appear at first sight. For example, though they can learn to drive tanks adequately, fire guns, and work the radio, they lack effective commanders for tank units and formations. It takes a high degree of physical fitness, nerves, courage, and coolness to direct a tank battle from inside a tank; the commander's tank, needless to say, should be well forward. This explains why the Israeli armored forces were able to defeat the Egyptians in Sinai, though the latter outgunned them and had heavier armor. The same holds good for air combat. The

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Israeli air force has learned to refer to Arab pilots as "plane-chauffeurs" in the sense that they can fly the planes but they are not fighter pilots. In Sinai they had a numerical superiority of about five to one in planes of more or less the same quality (Israel opinion holds the French Mystère to be rather better than the MIG's the Egyptians had, but there is not a great deal in it), but the Israelis never lost a single jet in the battles in which they won air superiority before the British and French intervened. As far as infantry is concerned, the best measure will always be provided by the battle casualties in Sinai. An unusually high proportion of Israeli casualties were officers, not only platoon commanders, but company and battalion commanders, and even one brigade commander. Israeli platoon and company commanders are expected to lead their units into battle, not command them from behind; battalion commanders are expected to control their unit from well forward, and to lead it into battle in case of emergency. This demands a high degree of physical fitness as well as courage and leadership. With such commanders even average troops respond well.

Now the poor quality of the Arab armies has important implications for the regime itself and for Israeli policy. The character and efficiency of the armed forces have a bearing on every society and its stability, but in the case of a military dictatorship, even more so than elsewhere. The Nasser regime based its claim to power primarily on the old regime's military failure and on promises to build a strong army which would "liberate" Palestine. Failure to do so cannot help having political consequences as time goes on. This appreciation has important implications for Israeli foreign policy. If there can be no substantial changes in morale, discipline, leadership, and numbers of the Arab armies during the next few years, then the decisive variable is armaments. The beginnings of a reserve-unit system have been introduced into the Egyptian and Syrian armies, but it will take some time to see how they work out in practice. This assumes that the Arabs do not receive direct operational assistance from the European Communist countries in the form of air, tank, and submarine crews, which would verge on a Soviet invasion of Israel and would become a matter of international concern.

THE implication is that Israel's foreign policy must be directed first and foremost to insuring access to the quantity and quality of modern armaments necessary to keep up with Nasser's, at prices Israel can afford to pay. All other foreign policy questions pale into insignificance in comparison. This need, and its realization by the policy-makers, has coincided with the growing prominence of the Ministry of Defense in foreign policy making and execution. This change is epitomized by the active diplomatic role of the Director General of the Ministry, Simon Peres. Peres, in his early thirties, is one of Ben Gurion's "young men"; he rose to his present position from that of head of the Armament and Equipment Procurement Division of the Ministry. His influence and participation in diplomacy —sometimes accompanied by friction with the Foreign Ministry—has been paramount in the developments which led to the ousting of Sharett from the post of Foreign Minister in 1956, and to the post-Sharett orientation, including the understanding with French military and political circles which permitted Israel to receive arms and later other benefits too. He has taken a leading part in the new policy of orientation towards other NATO countries, through military as well as diplomatic channels, which have made armaments and other military aid, rather than "sympathy" or diplomatic support, the prior desideratum.

These developments have been facilitated, or even to some extent evoked, by a change in Western strategic thinking. In contrast to the growing cold war weariness, pessimism, defeatism, and pro-Nasserism which still characterize much of the West's political thinking—and in particular socialist and liberal circles—military quarters are now

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more optimistic concerning the outcome of the cold war arms race against Russia. Impressive though Russian ballistic-missile advances may be, they are not yet operational, whereas the United States strategic air force with its string of bases round the world is, and its missile development is doing well. At the same time the belief that Nasser can be appeased is being steadily eroded by experience. Claims that Nasser could cut off European oil supplies are not taken seriously by experts. For one thing, oil production potential far exceeds demand and is growing rapidly. Iran, which lost markets during the Mossadegh spree, is out to regain them. During 1957 she increased production from 26 to 35 million tons, while Iraq's fell from 31 to 22 million. Were Iraqi oil to be lost to the West, Persia could make up most of the loss. Provided that the West can retain either Saudian or Kuweit supplies, together with Persian oil, it can insure European oil supplies, using giant tankers (which will otherwise be lying idle) round the Cape route.

Together with a stronger policy in general, the NATO chiefs are slowly coming to accept the idea that it is worth helping Israel, if only to use her as a bogeyman with which to threaten Nasser. In theory, the exploitation of these opportunities would need a considerable change in attitude on the part of the Israeli government and public opinion alike. In fact, the public is so defense-minded that so long as any specific action is presented as being essential to defense, it can be sure of overwhelming support among the population. True, the neutralists of both left and center (Communists, and fellow-traveling parties like Mapam and Ahduth Avoda, together with the World Zionist President Nahum Goldman) issue manifestos demanding "non-identification," "non-intervention," and "integration into the region." But they never dare oppose any specific policies where defense and diplomatic considerations are interwoven, as they almost invariably are nowadays. Their last attempt to oppose the government over arms purchases from Germany a year ago led to political defeat. Moreover, though the slogan of "integration into the region" is accepted in theory by everyone, its sponsors are at a loss to explain what it means in terms of the divided Middle East of today.

The government's permission to American and British planes to use Israeli air space for their help to Jordan (even though they handled it unnecessarily clumsily from the public relations point of view, as they so often do) did not create much of a problem inside Israel, in spite of severe misgivings about the possibility of a British double-cross, and the sharpness with which the Soviet government reacted. A few years ago the idea of welcoming Western landings in the area would have seemed rather wicked to most Israelis, right, left, and center. Today, though nobody admits to having changed his views or *Weltanschauung*, it seems the lesser evil to most.

ISRAEL is now looking forward to a period of steadily improving relationships with the non-Arab states of the Middle East, which outnumber the Arabs of the region, are stronger militarily, and less unstable politically. Relations between Israel and the "northern tier" powers are influenced considerably by Western policies in the Middle East. When American and British policy was oriented towards appeasement of Nasser and of Arab xenophobia in general, the Baghdad Pact powers were expected to avoid "embarrassing" these efforts. Now that the Western powers are in conflict with Nasser, and Iraq is in effect no longer a member of the Baghdad Pact, Turkey, Persia, and Pakistan have a freer hand in choosing their allies.

A few years ago the prospect of a long-drawn-out period of non-acceptance by the Arabs would have seemed almost unsupportable to Israeli policy-making circles and public alike. Everyone was certain that peace and "normalization" would be achieved; the only question was how and on what terms. By now, no one discusses the matter. The new officers' regimes are known to be cor-

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rupt, nasty, and militarist, without even being efficient. Since they are not revolutionizing the social structure, but appear to have replaced one corrupt ruling class by another, and instead of remedying the uglier traits of Arab character and society, are merely intensifying them, Israeli policy-makers are coming to the conclusion that things are unlikely to be either very much better or very much worse than before. This realization does not necessarily mean that Israeli policy-makers, diplomats, and political intelligence quarters are inherently wiser or better informed than their counterparts in the West. But they have lived longer in the Middle East; the present ruling strata personally remember the Young Turk revolution of 1908, the great enthusiasm it roused among the national minorities and the liberals (more or less the same thing) including the Jews of Palestine, and the subsequent disillusion when Enver and Talat Pashas proved to be more savage and bigoted than the Sultan Abdul Hamid, even though the Young Turks started out with more or less the same phrases as Nasser, Serraj, and Qassem. Israelis who deal with foreign affairs were always aware of those traits in Arab character and society whose eradication will be necessary before social systems and foreign policies can really be changed. So long as utopian mythology regarding Israel-Arab relations was obligatory, this knowledge had to be "repressed," or at least kept in a separate compartment of the mind. But now it is flooding back very strongly into current thinking.

This approach assumes that there will not be a full-scale Soviet invasion of the area or a third world war, since in either of these two eventualities all policies become meaningless. In general, Israeli policy-makers have not yet found a conceptual framework in which to analyze and react to Soviet words and actions in the area; perhaps they are hampered too much by indignation and disappointment. At all events, they not only do not speak about the Soviet Union where they can avoid it, they even avoid thinking about it. ("Why should we go out of our way to provoke the Russians when we can never be sure that the Americans will back us up" is a common rationalization.)

But world wars apart, Israel has become reconciled to indefinite non-acceptance in a permanently unstable Middle East, and the problem of obtaining up-to-date jet planes has ousted the endeavor to convince Moslem and Christian alike that Israel is a country deserving of affection—"eager to love and be loved" was a phrase used in all seriousness by one of Mr. Sharett's right-hand men not so long ago. The change is encouraging, if only because the acquisition of jet planes is possible, whereas the earlier aspirations were not. Indeed, the most reassuring thing about these new developments is that they did not originate from any global reappraisal or theoretical reformulation—many of their authors would even deny that their basic approach has changed at all during the decade—but simply out of a reaction to needs and opportunities.

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THE PURITAN TRADITION

Community Above Ideology

DANIEL J. BOORSTIN

THE *Arbella*, a ship of three hundred and fifty tons, twenty-eight guns, and a crew of fifty-two, during the spring of 1630 was carrying westward across the Atlantic the future leaders of Massachusetts Bay Colony. The ship had sailed from Cowes in the Isle of Wight, on March 29, and was not to reach America till late June. Among the several ways of passing the time, of cementing the community and of propitiating God, perhaps the most popular was the sermon. The leader of the new community, John Winthrop, while preaching to his fellow-passengers, struck the keynote of American history. "Wee shall be," Winthrop prophesied, "as a Citty upon a Hill, the eies of all people are uppon us; soe that if wee shall deale falsely with our god in this worke wee have undertaken and soe cause him to withdrawe his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world." No one writing after the fact, three hundred years later, could better have expressed the American sense of destiny. In describing the Puritan experience we will see how this sense of destiny came into being, and what prevented it from becoming fanatical or utopian. The Puritan beacon for misguided mankind was to be neither a book nor a theory. It was to be the community itself. America had something to teach all men: not by precept but by example. . . .

Never was a people more sure that it was on the right track. "That which is our greatest comfort, and meanes of defence above all others," Francis Higginson wrote in the earliest days, in *New-Englands Plantation*, "is, that we have here the true Religion and holy Ordinances of Almightie God taught among us . . . thus we doubt not but God will be with us, and if God be with us, who can be against us?" But their orthodoxy had a peculiar character. Compared with Americans of the 18th or the 19th century, the Puritans surely were theology-minded. The doctrines of the Fall of Man, of Sin, of Salvation, Predestination, Election, and Conversion were their meat and drink. Yet what really distinguished them in their day was that they were less interested in theology itself than in the application of theology to everyday life, and especially to society. From the 17th-century point of view their interest in theology was practical. They were less concerned with perfecting their formulation of the Truth than with making their society in America embody the Truth they already knew. Puritan New England was a noble experiment in applied theology.

The Puritans in the Wilderness—away from Old World centers of learning, far from great university libraries, threatened daily by the thousand and one hardships and perils of a savage America—were poorly situated for elaborating a theology and disputing its fine points. For such an enterprise John Calvin in Switzerland or William Ames in Holland was much better located. But for testing a theology, for seeing whether Zion could be rebuilt if men abandoned the false foundations of the centuries since Jesus—for this New England offered a rare opportunity. So it was that although the Puritans in the New World made the Calvinist theology their point of departure, they made it precisely that and nothing else. From it they departed at once into the practical life. Down to the middle of the 18th century, there was hardly an important work of speculative theology produced in New England.

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It was not that the writing of books was impossible in the New World. Rather, it was that theological speculation was not what interested the new Americans. Instead, there came from the New England presses and from the pens of New England authors who sent their works to England an abundance of sermons, textual commentaries, collections of "providences," statutes, and remarkable works of history. With the possible exception of Roger Williams, who was out of the stream of New England orthodoxy anyway, Massachusetts Bay did not produce a major figure in theology until the days of Jonathan Edwards in the mid-18th century. And by then Puritanism was all but dead.

During the great days of New England Puritanism there was not a single important dispute which was primarily theological. There were, to be sure, crises over who should rule New England, whether John Winthrop or Thomas Dudley or Harry Vane should be governor, whether the power or representation of different classes in the community should be changed, whether the Child Petition should be accepted, whether penalties for crime should be fixed by statute, whether the assistants should have a veto, whether outlying towns should have more representatives in the General Court. Even the disputes with Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams primarily concerned the qualifications, power, and prestige of the rulers. If, indeed, the Puritans were theology-minded . . . they argued about institutions.

One gets the same impression in looking for evidences of political speculation, for philosophical inquiry into the nature of community and the function of government. Nothing in Puritanism itself was uncongenial to such speculation; Puritans in England at the time were discussing the fine points of their theory: What was the true nature of liberty? When should a true Puritan resist a corrupt civil government? When should diversity be tolerated? And we need not look only to giants like John Milton. The debates among the officers in Cromwell's Puritan Army between 1647 and 1649 reveal how different their intellectual atmosphere was from that of New England. They were not professional intellectuals, but soldiers and men of action; yet even they stopped to argue the theory of revolution and the philosophy of sovereignty. . . .

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY America had none of the speculative vigor of English Puritanism. For Massachusetts Bay possessed an orthodoxy. During the classic age of the first generation, at least, it was a community of self-selected conformists. In 1637 the General Court passed an order prohibiting anyone from settling within the colony without first having his orthodoxy approved by the magistrates. Perhaps never again, until the McCarran Act, were our immigrants required to be so aseptic. John Winthrop was bold and clear in defense of the order. Here was a community formed by free consent of its members. Why should they not exclude dangerous men, or men with dangerous thoughts? What right had supporters of a subversive Mr. Wheelwright to claim entrance to the colony? "If we conceive and find by sadd experience that his opinions are such, as by his own profession cannot stand with externall peace, may we not provide for our peace, by keeping off such as would strengthen him and infect others with such dangerous tenets?"

In the eyes of Puritans this was the peculiar opportunity of New England. Why not for once see what true orthodoxy could accomplish? Why not in one unspoiled corner of the world declare a truce on doubts, on theological bickering? Here at last men could devote their full energy to *applying* Christianity—not to clarifying doctrine but to building Zion. . . . The Puritans in New England were surprisingly successful for some years at keeping their community orthodox. In doing so, they also made it sterile of speculative thought. Their principal theological treatises were works by William Ames (who never saw New England) and John Norton's *Orthodox Evangelist*, a rudimentary summary of the works of English divines. In England the presbyterians and independents and levelers within Puritanism were daring each other to extend and clarify their doctrines; but we see little of this in America. . . .

In New England the critics, doubters, and dissenters were expelled from the community; in England the Puritans had to find ways of living with them. It was in England, therefore, that a modern theory of toleration began to develop. Milton and his less famous and less reflective contemporaries were willing to debate, as if it were an open question,

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"whether the magistrate have, or ought to have, any compulsive and restrictive power in matters of religion." Such was the current of European liberal thought in which Roger Williams found himself. But Williams was banished from Massachusetts Bay Colony and became a by-word of heterodoxy and rebellion. He died in poverty, an outcast from that colony. If his little Providence eventually prospered, it was never to be more than a satellite of the powerful orthodox mother-colony.

What actually distinguished that mother-colony in the great age of New England Puritanism was its refusal, for reasons of its own, to develop a theory of toleration. In mid-17th-century England we note a growing fear that attempts to suppress error would inevitably suppress truth, a fear that magistrates' power over religion might give them tyranny over conscience. "I know there is but one truth," wrote the author of one of the many English pamphlets on liberty of conscience in 1645, "But this truth cannot be so easily brought forth without this liberty; and a general restraint, though intended but for errors, yet through the unskilfulness of men, may fall upon the truth. And better many errors of some kind suffered than one useful truth be obstructed or destroyed." In contrast, the impregnable view of New England Puritanism was expressed in the words of John Cotton:

> The Apostle directeth, Tit. 3.10 and giveth the Reason, that in fundamentall and principall points of Doctrine or Worship, the Word of God in such things is so cleare, that hee cannot but bee convinced in Conscience of the dangerous Errour of his way, after once or twice Admonition, wisely and faithfully dispensed. And then if any one persist, it is not out of Conscience, but against his Conscience, as the Apostle saith, vers. 11. He is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of Himselfe, that is, of his owne Conscience. So that if such a Man after such Admonition shall still persist in the Errour of his way, and be therefore punished; He is not persecuted for Cause of Conscience, but for sinning against his Owne Conscience.

The leaders of Massachusetts Bay Colony enjoyed the luxury, no longer feasible in 17th-century England, of a pure and simple orthodoxy.

The failure of New England Puritans to develop a theory of toleration, or even freely to examine the question, was not in all ways a weakness. It made their literature less rich and gave much of their writing a quaint and crabbed sound, but for a time at least, it was a source of strength. Theirs was not a philosophic enterprise; they were, first and foremost, community-builders. The energies which their English contemporaries gave to sharpening the distinctions between "compulsive" and "restrictive" powers in religion, between "matters essential" and "matters indifferent" and to a host of other questions, which have never ceased to bother reflective students of political theory, the American Puritans were giving to marking off the boundaries of their new towns, to enforcing their criminal laws, and to fighting the Indian menace. Their very orthodoxy strengthened their practical bent.

American Puritans were hardly more distracted from their practical tasks by theology and metaphysics than we are today. They transcended theological preoccupation precisely because they had no doubts and allowed no dissent. Had they spent as much of their energy in debating with each other as did their English contemporaries, they might have lacked the singlemindedness needed to overcome the dark, unpredictable perils of a wilderness. They might have merited praise as precursors of modern liberalism, but they might never have helped found a nation.

THE practical temper, strengthened by New England orthodoxy and the opportunities of the New World, was not evidenced merely in the absence of theoretical treatises and abstract disputation. The New England sermon gave it vivid expression. During the first decades of settlement, the New England mind found its perfect medium and achieved its spectacular success in the sermon. This success would have been impossible without a firm orthodoxy and a practical emphasis. The Puritans of Massachusetts Bay thus foreshadowed the circumstances which, throughout American history, were to give peculiar prominence to the spoken . . . word.

The scarcity of monumental volumes on theoretical questions and the flood of spoken words have been complementary facts about American culture from the very beginning.

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The public speech, whether sermon, commencement address, or whistle-stop campaign talk, is a public affirmation that the listeners share a common discourse and a common body of values. The spoken word is inevitably more topical than the printed word: it attempts to explain the connection between the shared community values and the predicament of man at a particular time and place. It is directed to people whom the speaker confronts, and to their current problems.

In the doctrine of all Protestantism there were, of course, special reasons for the importance of preaching. If priestly intermediaries between each soul and God were to be dispensed with, the message of the Gospel had to be brought home to each man. And what better means than the spoken word, in which an eloquent and learned man established the relation of the Word of God to the condition of those before him? Moreover, the 17th century was the great age of English sermons—and not only among Puritans. It was the age of John Donne and Jeremy Taylor, high Anglicans whose preachments were classics of the sermon form. By the mid-17th century, English Puritans had developed so distinctive a style of prose for their sermons that an attentive listener could discover the theology of a minister from the form of his preaching.

In contrast to the involved "metaphysical" style of Lancelot Andrewes and John Donne, the Puritans developed a manner which came to be known, in their own words, as the "plain" style. The rules of this style were codified into preachers' manuals like William Perkins' *Art of Prophecying*, an English handbook found on nearly every book-list in early New England. The mark of the plain style was, of course, plainness. But it was also marked by greater attention to persuasion and the practical consequences of a doctrine than to the elaboration of the theory itself. The Puritan sermon, as Perry Miller explains, was "more like a lawyer's brief than a work of art." Its characteristic plan had three parts: "doctrines," "reasons," and "uses." The "doctrine" was what the preacher discovered by "opening" a Biblical text, which was always the starting point; the "reasons" supported the doctrine; and the "uses" were the application of the doctrine to the lives of the listeners—the "instruction" which came out of the sermon. . . .

In New England, the sermon was far more than a literary form. It was an institution, perhaps the characteristic institution of Puritanism here. It was the ritual application of theology to community-building and to the tasks and trials of everyday life. It was not, as it was inevitably in England, a mere sectarian utterance of a part of the community. It was actually the orthodox manifesto and self-criticism of the community as a whole, a kind of reiterated declaration of independence, a continual rediscovery of purposes. The pulpit, and not the altar, held the place of honor in the New England meeting-house. So too the sermon itself, the specific application of the Word of God, was the focus of the best minds of New England. What most encouraged Higginson to believe his colony might become an example of the true religion was not the simple rectitude of Puritan doctrine, but "that we have here the true Religion and holy Ordinances of Almightie God taught among us: Thankes be to God, we have plentie of Preaching, and diligent Cathechizing."

In England, after the collapse of the Puritan political program in 1660, individual Puritans were thrown back upon themselves. They became introspective: each Puritan sought, as in *Grace Abounding*, to perfect himself, with scant regard to the community. In America, where the Puritans were remote from English domestic politics, they remained free to continue their social enterprise. The history of the New England pulpit is thus an unbroken chronicle of the attempt of leaders in the New World to bring their community steadily closer to the Christian model.

THE New England meeting-house, like the synagogue on which it was consciously modeled, was primarily a place of instruction. Here the community learned its duties. Here men found their separate paths to conversion, so they could better build their Zion in the wilderness, a City upon a Hill to which other men might in their turn look for instruction. As the meeting-house was the geographical and social center of the New England town, so the sermon was the central event in the meeting-house. The sermon was as important a ritual as the oc-

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casions on which ancient Mesopotamians learned from their priests the dooms passed in the legislature of their Gods. In New England the ministers were, in their own words, "opening" the texts of the Bible by which they had to live and build their society. The sermons were thoroughly theological and yet thoroughly practical: based on common acceptance of a theology, which left to the minister only the discovery of its "uses" for converting saints and building Zion.

The occasions of the sermon, most of which have been too easily forgotten, bear witness to its central place in the life of early New England. There were two sermons on the Sabbath, and usually a lecture-sermon on Thursday. Attendance was required by law; absence was punishable by fine (an Act of 1646 fixed five shillings for each offense). The laws described the Sabbath ritual as "the publick ministry of the Word." There was hardly a public event of which the most memorable feature was not the sermon. Most distinctive, perhaps, were the election-day sermons, by which the clergy affected the course of political events and which remained a New England institution through the American Revolution. These explained the meaning of the orthodox theology for the choices before the voters, described the character of a good ruler and the mutual duties of the people and their governors. The artillery sermons, which were delivered on the occasion of the muster of the militia and their election of officers, began in about 1659. In addition, the numerous (10 in Massachusetts Bay in 1639; 50 in 1675-76) Fast and Thanksgiving Days were focused on the sermon, which explained to the people why God was humbling or rewarding them. . . .

If attendance at the sermon was compulsory, it was expected to be anything but perfunctory. The scarcity of books and the significance of the subject induced many listeners to bring notebooks. A minister, commonly settled in a parish for his lifetime, did not look for a larger or more wealthy congregation. Moreover, his audience was, for that age, remarkably literate and attentive, and he could not hope to amuse or divert them by "book reviews," by concert artists, or outside speakers. All these circumstances served to hold the early New England preacher to a high intellectual standard and encouraged him to make his performances merit their central place. The New England sermon, then, was the communal ceremony which brought a strong orthodoxy to bear on the minutiae of life—the drowning of a boy while skating on the Charles, an earthquake, a plague of locusts, the arrival of a ship, the election of a magistrate, or the mustering of militia. Theology was an instrument for building Zion in America.

To the Puritans and to many who came here after them, the American destiny was inseparable from the mission of community-building. For hardly a moment in the history of this civilization would men turn from the perfection of their institutions to the improvement of their doctrine. Like many later generations of Americans, the Puritans were more interested in institutions that functioned than in generalities that glittered. The phrase "The New England Way" was an earlier version (not entirely different in spirit though vastly different in content) of the modern notion of an American Way of Life. What the Puritans wanted to "purify" in the English church was not its theology but its policy, not its theory but its practice. New Englanders were outspokenly conformist in matters of doctrine. "Be it so that we are in the utmost parts of the Earth;" explained John Norton, "we have onely changed our Climate, not our mindes." Again and again when the leaders of American Puritanism met, they proclaimed their orthodoxy. This was revealed in the very form of their statements. The basic documents of New England Puritanism were not "creeds" but "platforms." Nearly two centuries before the first American political party produced its "platform" attesting to its greater concern for a program of action than for a frame of thinking, American Puritans had struck off in the same direction. The clearest statement of their religious purposes came out of a meeting of the church elders in Cambridge in 1648. Published under the title, "A Platform of Church Discipline," it came to be known as "The Cambridge Platform." The ministers declared:

Our Churches here, as (by the grace of Christ) wee beleive and profess the same Doctrine of the trueth of the Gospell, which generally is

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received in all the reformed Churches of Christ in Europe: so especially, wee desire not to vary from the doctrine of faith, & truth held forth by the churches of our native country . . . wee, who are by nature, English men, doe desire to hold forth the same doctrine of religion (especially in fundamentalls) which wee see & know to be held by the churches of England, according to the truth of the Gospell.

What disturbed the people of New England, according to John Cotton's preface, was "the unkind, & unbrotherly, & unchristian contentions of our godly brethren, & countrymen, in matters of church-government." To the improvement of church government, the New England clergy pledged its efforts. The text of the "platform," the manifesto of New England congregationalism and its basis for over a half-century, was devoted only to these practical ends.

The orthodoxy of New England churches is a refrain heard again and again in the early synods. "As to matters of Doctrine," the ministers declared in Boston in 1680, "we agree with other Reformed Churches: Nor was it that, but what concerns Worship and Discipline, that caused our Fathers to come into this wilderness, whiles it was a land not sown, that so they might have liberty to practice accordingly." A half-century later, in 1726, Cotton Mather insisted that still the doctrine of the Church of England was more universally held and preached in New England than in any nation, that their only "points peculiar" were those of discipline.

The Puritans' emphasis on way of life was so strong that it made any generalized concept of "the church" seem unreal or even dangerous. They became wary of using the word "church" to refer to those who subscribed to a particular body of doctrine, or even to the building in which the congregation met. New Englanders called their place of worship a "meeting-house." It was a dangerous figure of speech, Richard Mather once observed, to call that meeting-house a "church." "There is no just ground from scripture to apply such a trope as church to a house for a public assembly." For years, therefore, when the men of New England spoke of what they had to offer the world, they referred neither to their "creed" nor their "church," but to The New England Way. . . .

The basic fact about congregationalism was its emphasis on the going relationship among men. Each church was not a part of a hierarchy, nor a branch of a perfected institution, but a kind of club composed of individual Christians searching for a godly way of life. The congregational church was a group of going concerns, not a monolithic establishment. When they used the word at all, Puritans usually spoke of the "churches" rather than the "church" of New England. What held them together was no unified administrative structure, but a common quest, a common way of living. At the heart of the congregational idea was the unifying notion that a proper Christian church was one adapted to the special circumstances of its place and arising out of the continuing agreement of certain particular Christians. What of the *manner* of church-worship? asked the opening chapter of the Cambridge Platform. Its answer was simply that worship "be done in such a manner, as all Circumstances considered, is most expedient for edification: so, as if there bee no errour of man concerning their determination, the determining of them is to be accounted as if it were divine." The size of a congregation was also to be fixed by practical considerations. "The *matter* of the Church in respect of its *quantity* ought not to be of greater number than may ordinarily meet together conveniently in one place: nor ordinarily fewer, then may conveniently carry on Church-work." Each congregation had its own problems, "Vertues of their own, for which others are not praysed: Corruptions of their owne, for which others are not blamed."

A CHURCH was formed, then, not by administrative fiat nor by the random gathering of professing Christians, but by the "covenanting" or agreement of a group of "saints," that is, Christians who had had a special "converting" experience. The status of minister was not acquired from a seminary or by the laying on of priestly hands. Rather it was a function performed by a godly man in relation to a group of other men. To be a minister at all a man had to be "called" by a group of Christians; when that relation ceased, he was no longer a minister. In the congregational polity, relations among men overshadowed inherited or

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anointed status: the ways overshadowed the forms.

Not least important in encouraging this point of view was the Puritan use of the Bible. If there was any codification of Puritan beliefs, it was in the Word of God. The Puritans wished to be "guided by one rule, even the Word of the most high." More perhaps than for any other Christians of their age, the Bible was their guide. Through it, they explained in the Cambridge Platform, every man could find the design of life and the shape of the Truth. . . .

But to try to live by the Bible was vastly different from trying to live by the Laws of the Medes and the Persians, by the Athanasian Creed, or even by the Westminster Confession. For the Bible was actually neither a codification nor a credo; it was a narrative. From this simple fact came much of the special character of the Puritan approach to experience. There were, of course, parts of the Bible (like Leviticus and Deuteronomy) which contained an explicit code of laws; the Puritans were attracted to these simply because the commands were so clear. The Ten Commandments were, of course, in the foreground of their thinking, but the Bible as a whole was the law of their life. For answers to their problems they drew as readily on Exodus, Kings, or Romans, as on the less narrative portions of the Bible. Their peculiar circumstances and their flair for the dramatic led them to see special significance in these narrative passages. The basic reality in their life was the analogy with the Children of Israel. They conceived that by going out into the Wilderness, they were reliving the story of Exodus and not merely obeying an explicit command to go into the wilderness. For them the Bible was less a body of legislation than a set of binding precedents.

The result was that these Puritans were preoccupied with the similarities in pairs of situations: the situation described in a Bible story and that in which they found themselves. "Thou shalt not kill" was accepted without discussion. What interested them, and what became the subject of their debate was whether, and how and why, an episode in the Bible was like one in their own lives. The "great and terrible Earthquake" of June 1, 1638, and the one of January 14, 1639, "which happened much about the time the Lordly Prelates were preparing their injunctions for . . . roared from Sion, (as in the dayes of the Prophet Amos)." Almost every page of early New England literature provides an example. "The rule that directeth the choice of supreame governors," wrote John Cotton, "is of like aequitie and weight in all magistrates, that one of their brethren (not a stranger) should be set over them, Deut. 17.15 and Jethroes be set over the people, should be men fearing God, Exod, 18.21, and Solomon maketh it the joy of a commonwealth, when the righteous are in authority, and their mourning when the wicked rule, Prov. 20.21. Job 34.30."

What the Puritans had developed in America was a practical common-law orthodoxy. Their heavy reliance on the Bible, and their preoccupation with platforms, programs of action, and schemes of confederation—rather than with religious dogma—fixed the temper of their society, and foreshadowed American political life for centuries to come.

Among the circumstances which led the American Puritans to a practical approach to their doctrine, none was more important than the fact that they were colonials. However clear and dogmatic the dictates of their religion, they did not consider themselves free to construct their political institutions of whole cloth. Their fellow-Calvinists in Geneva several decades before had been limited only by their private aspirations and the demands of their dogma. But even in earliest New England one can see the marks of that colonial situation which would decisively affect all American political thought through the era of the Revolution, and which helped shape the moderate, compromising, and traditionalist character of our institutions. The effects of this colonial situation can be seen, first, in the widely accepted assumption that there were definite limits which the legislators were not free to transgress—this, in a word, was constitutionalism—and, second, in the idea that the primary and normal way of developing civil institutions was by custom and tradition rather than by legislative or administrative fiat. These were rooted less in a deliberate political preference than in the circumstance in which the New England Puritans found themselves.

In the first charter of Massachusetts Bay

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Colony in 1629, King Charles had authorized the General Court of the colony to make "all Manner of wholesome and reasonable Orders, Lawes, Statutes, and Ordinances, Direccons, and Instruccons"—but with the provision that they be "not contrairie to the Lawes of this our Realme of England." The colonists, though not lawyers, were of a decidedly legalistic turn of mind; they took this limitation seriously. It was appealed to from all sides, by the ruling clique as well as by the critics and rebels.

The story of the struggle for law in early New England has not yet been fully told. But even what we already know shows that the rulers of this Bible commonwealth were haunted by the skeleton of old English institutions. At every point both rulers and rebels felt bound to assume that an authentic Bible commonwealth could not depart far from the ancient institutions of the mother country. As early as 1635, Winthrop tells us, the deputies were worried that the magistrates "for want of positive laws, in many cases, might proceed according to their discretions." The remedy which they sought, and which they persuaded the General Court to adopt, was plainly on the English pattern: "that some men should be appointed to frame a body of grounds of laws, *in resemblance to a Magna Charta*, which . . . should be received for fundamental laws."

The legislative history of early New England is the story of successive attempts to provide, first, a "Magna Charta" for the inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay Colony and, later, a handy compilation of their laws. The small ruling group of early New England was not eager to embody its institutions in an all-embracing code. Leaders like John Winthrop doubted the wisdom of confining institutions by a pattern of words; they also doubted their authority. They were hardly more worried that their laws should be "scriptural," that is approved by the Bible, than that they should be sufficiently English; and that any changes in English laws should have ample warrant in local needs.

We have been almost blind to this side of early New England life. Dazzled by the light they found in Scripture, we have failed to see the steady illumination they found in old English example. For instance, when historians came upon a little work by John Cotton entitled *Moses His Judicials*, they hastily concluded that since it was Biblical and dogmatic it must have been the Code of Massachusetts Bay. But the evidence shows that his code was never adopted into law, and it may never have been intended to be.

The lawmakers of the colony, to the extent their knowledge allowed and with only minor exceptions, actually followed English example. Their colonial situation made them wary of trying to create institutions according to their own notions, and alert to the need of adapting old institutions to new conditions. They were among the first to take a consciously pragmatic approach to the common law; and it was their colonial situation which gave them the occasion. . . .

THE most important of the early compilations of Massachusetts law was *The Book of the General Lawes and Libertyes* of 1648 which was to be the basis of later legislation and which influenced the laws of other colonies, including Connecticut and New Haven. The preface published by the General Court apologized for the inadequacy of the compilation both as a reproduction of English institutions and as an adaptation to colonial conditions.

> We have not published it as a perfect body of laws sufficient to carry on the Government established for future times, nor could it be expected that we should promise such a thing. For if it be no disparagement to the wisedome of the High Court of Parliament in England that in four hundred years they could not so compile their lawes, and regulate proceedings in Courts of Justice &c: but that they had still new work to do of the same kinde almost every Parliament: there can be no just cause to blame a poor Colonie (being unfurnished of Lawyers and Statesmen) that in eighteen years hath produced no more, nor better rules for a good, and setled Government then this Book holds forth: nor have you (our Brethren and Neighbours) any cause, whether you look back upon our Native Country, or take your observation by other States, & Common wealths in Europe) to complaine. . . .

The Puritans of Massachusetts Bay said that they started from "the lawes of God" rather than the laws of Englishmen. Yet in their eyes, the two seemed happily to coincide. . . .

Their satisfaction was as great as that of Sir William Blackstone a century later and

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of conservative English lawyers ever since, in discovering that scriptural law and/or natural law happened already to be embodied in the English rules.

Scholarly dispute as to whether early New England law was primarily scriptural or primarily English is beside the point. For early New Englanders these two turned out to be pretty much the same. Very little of their early legal literature attempted to construct new institutions from Biblical materials. They were trying, for the most part, to demonstrate the coincidence between what the Scriptures required and what English law had already provided.

We have at least one valuable witness on this matter. Thomas Lechford had had some legal training in England, and although he was in Massachusetts Bay only from 1638 to 1641, those were the crucial years when the Body of Liberties of 1641 was put together. Partly through his own forwardness and partly from the scarcity of legal talent in the colony, he was intimately connected with its legal history. But, because neither his theology nor his method of persuading jurors was orthodox, the magistrates disbarred him and censured him for meddling in such affairs. These and other irritations led him to return to England permanently, where in 1642 he issued a little book, *Plain Dealing: or Newes from New-England*. Its object (stated on the title-page) was to give "A short view of New-Englands present Government, both Ecclesiasticall and Civil, compared with the anciently-received and established Government of England." Lechford—an unsympathetic, if not actually malicious, observer—was distinguished from his contemporaries by some legal knowledge and by personal experience with New England institutions. His book is an informed, though not dispassionate, account of deviations, which he eagerly sought out, of New English from Old English laws.

LECHFORD'S main complaint was, of course, about the churches of Massachusetts Bay. On the one hand, their membership requirements were too strict: it was not enough for a person to be of blameless conduct or to subscribe to the articles of faith. The applicants for church-membership had to satisfy the Elders and then the whole congregation of "the worke of grace upon their soules, or how God hath beene dealing with them about their conversion . . . that they are true beleevers, that they have beene wounded in their hearts for their originall sinne, and actuall transgressions, and can pitch upon some promise of free grace in the Scripture, for the ground of their faith, and they finde their hearts drawne to beleeve in Christ Jesus, for their justification and salvation . . . and that they know competently the summe of Christian faith." This procedure, Lechford observed, was evil—even inhuman—for sometimes a master would be admitted and not his servant, sometimes the servant alone, sometimes a husband and not his wife, sometimes a child and not his parent. The effects of these restrictions were far-reaching since no one could be a "freeman" of the colony unless he had been admitted to the church. And only "freemen" could vote or hold office.

On the other hand Lechford thought the government of New England churches was too democratical, for there were no bishops, and how could a church be well-ordered where in effect every church-member was a bishop? Yet this was precisely what the congregational organization amounted to. "If the people may make Ministers, or any Ministers make others without an Apostolicall Bishop, what confusion will there be? If the whole Church, or every congregation, as our good men think, have the power to the keyes, how many Bishops then shall we have?"

Although the congregational churches of New England never acquired a bishop, even before the end of the 17th century their practical, compromising spirit had led them to modify the strict requirements for church-membership to which Lechford and other English critics objected. By the ingenious doctrine of the "Half-Way Covenant," first officially proposed in the meeting of ministers in 1662, they created a new class of church-membership for those who had not had the intense "converting experience" but who were descended from those who had the experience. In this way they kept the church-benches filled without abandoning their ideal of a purified church where only "visible Saints" could be full members.

A careful look at Lechford's criticism of the laws of New England impresses one with how little they deviated from English

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practice. Even these deviations were easily explained by life in a wilderness colony, and would be removed as soon as the New Englanders could manage it. His first objection was the "want of proceeding duly upon record"—the legal proceedings were carried on orally rather than by exchange of documents. According to Lechford, this tended to make the government arbitrary, depriving the parties and judges of a clear understanding of the issues and making it more difficult to formulate precedents. His second objection, akin to the first, was the prohibition of paid attorneys and advocates. He declared hired lawyers "necessary to assist the poore and unlearned in their causes, and that according to the warrant and intendment of holy Writ, and of right reason. I have knowne by experience, and heard divers have suffered wrong by default of such in New England. . . . But take heede my brethren, despise not learning, nor the worthy Lawyers of either gown, lest you repent too late."

Both these divergences from English practice were due to the lack of trained lawyers. Lechford himself was one of the very few men of legal training in Boston; even judges were commonly untrained in the law. Complex legal documents could not be drawn, nor professional legal counsel given, except by trained lawyers; and, for all practical purposes, such were not to be found in New England.

THE magistrates of New England were soon to remove the differences of which Lechford complained. The Body of Liberties of 1641 (Liberty No. 27) provided that if the plaintiff filed a written declaration, the defendant was to have "libertie and time to give in his answer in writings, And soe in all further proceedings betwene partie and partie." A law of 1647 which described the evils to which Lechford referred went still further, requiring such a written declaration to be filed in all civil cases in due time before court opened, so that the defendant would have time to prepare his written answer. But such procedures could not be legislated into being if the community lacked qualified persons to put them into practice. Therefore this requirement was omitted from later compilations of the laws, and it was decades before written "pleadings" (the technical documents which lawyers exchange during a lawsuit) became common. Meanwhile, the absence of written pleadings sometimes gave New England litigants the advantage of having their cases judged on their substance, while English lawyers and judges might quibble over the forms of documents. Increasing commerce and the growing number of men with legal training soon led the legislature of Massachusetts Bay to remove Lechford's other objection: by 1648 it had become legal to employ paid attorneys.

Legal proceedings of the early years give us the impression of a people without much legal training and with few lawbooks who were trying to reproduce substantially what they knew "back home." Far from being a crude and novel system of popular law, or an attempt to create institutions from pure Scripture, what they produced was instead a layman's version of English legal institutions. The half-remembered and half-understood technical language of English lawyers was being roughly applied to American problems. Much remains to be learned of the law of those days; and the very characteristics we have described (the lack of written pleadings, for example) handicap the historian. Cases were not printed; judges did not give reasons for their decisions. Even in the 1670's judicial precedents (English or colonial) or English statutes were not yet being cited. . . .

Whenever the rulers of New England found themselves and their laws under attack, their first defense was to show how closely their rules adhered to those of England. The General Court of Massachusetts Bay always argued that the coincidence of New English and Old English laws was remarkable. When hard pressed they went on to argue that even the apparent deviations from English law were themselves justified by the laws of England, under which "the city of London and other corporations have divers customs and by-laws different from the common and statute laws of England."

The scarcity of English lawbooks troubled them. The General Court on November 11, 1647, "to the end we may have the bettr light for making and proceeding about laws" ordered the purchase of two copies each of six technical English legal works: Coke on Littleton, The Book of Entries, Coke on Magna Charta, New Terms of the Law,

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Dalton's Justice of the Peace, and Coke's Reports. The form of early Massachusetts legal documents (deeds, powers of attorney, leases, bonds, partnership agreements, etc.) suggests that they were copied from the same handbooks which guided English lawyers.

If we do not look at the form or language of their law but at its substance, we are again impressed by how few changes were made in New England. The most dramatic and most obvious were in the list of capital crimes. To those crimes punishable by death under the laws of England, the colonists by 1648 had added a number of others, including idolatry (violations of the First Commandment), blasphemy, man-stealing (from Exod. 21.16), adultery with a married woman, perjury with intent to secure the death of another, the cursing of a parent by a child over 16 years of age (Exod. 21.17), the offense of being a "rebellious son" (Deut. 21.20-21), and the third offense of burglary or highway robbery. These were clear cases where the laws of Scripture were allowed to override the laws of England.

But before we attach too much significance to these deviations, we must remember that in the law of capital crimes, both Englishmen and Americans were accustomed to the greatest divergence between practice and theory in those days. In England the merciful fictions of "benefit of clergy" nullified the letter of the law; in New England the practice of public confession perhaps accomplished a similar result. All this, of course, made the New England modifications of the criminal law still less significant. This was a realm where people were accustomed to unenforced rules and where scriptural orthodoxy could be purchased with the least change in the actual ways of daily life.

IF THERE was ever a people whose intellectual baggage equipped them for a journey into Utopia it was the New England Puritans. In their Bible they had a blueprint for the Good Society; their costly expedition to America gave them a vested interest in believing it possible to build Zion on this earth. In view of these facts it is remarkable that there was so little of the utopian in their thinking about society. There are a number of explanations for this. The English law was a powerful and sobering influence: colonists were persuaded by practical interests such as the retention of their charter and the preservation of their land-titles, as well as by their sentimental attachment to the English basis of their legal system. The pessimism, the vivid sense of evil, which was so intimate a part of Calvinism discouraged daydreams. Finally, there was the overwhelming novelty and insecurity of life in the wilderness which made the people more anxious to cling to familiar institutions, and led them to discover a new coincidence between the laws of God and the laws of England (and hence of New England).

The peculiar character of their Biblical orthodoxy nourished a practical and non-utopian frame of mind. Their political thought did not turn toward delineating The Good Society precisely because the Bible had already offered the anatomy of Zion. Moreover, the Bible was a narrative and not a speculative work; theirs was at most a common-law utopianism, a utopianism of analogies in situation rather than of dogmas, principles, and abstractions.

Perhaps because their basic theoretical questions had been settled the Puritans were able to concentrate on human and practical problems. And strangely enough, those problems were a preview of the ones which would continue to trouble American political thought. They were concerned less with the ends of society than with its organization and less with making the community good than with making it effective, with insuring the integrity and self-restraint of its leaders and with preventing its government from being oppressive.

The problems which worried the Puritans in New England were three. The first was how to select leaders and representatives. From the beginning what had distinguished the Puritans (and had laid them open to attack by Lechford and others) was their strict criterion of church-membership, their fear that if the unconverted could be members of the church they might become its rulers. Their concept of a church was, in its own very limited way, of a kind of ecclesiastical self-government: there were to be no bishops because the "members" of each church were fit to rule themselves. Many of the major disputes of early New England were essentially debates over who were fit rulers and how they should be selected. The

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early political history of Massachusetts Bay could almost be written as a history of disagreements over this problem. What were to be the relations between the magistrates and the deputies? How many deputies from each town? Many of their sermons and even their "speculative" writings were on this subject.

Their second concern was with the proper limits of political power. This question was never better stated than by John Cotton. "It is therefore most wholsome for Magistrates and Officers in Church and Commonwealth never to affect more liberty and authority then will do them good, and the People good; for what ever transcendant power is given will certainly over-run those that give it, and those that receive it: There is a straine in a mans heart that will sometime or other runne out to excesse unlesse the Lord restraine it, but it is not good to venture it: It is necessary therefore, that all power that is on earth be limited. . . ." The form of the early compilations of their laws shows this preoccupation. The first compilation of Massachusetts law (1641) was known, significantly, as "The Body of Liberties" and managed to state the whole of the legal system in terms of the "liberties" of different members of the community. It began with a paraphrase of Magna Charta, followed by the limitations on judicial proceedings, went on to the "liberties" of freemen, women, children, foreigners, and included those "of the brute creature." Even the law of capital crimes was stated in the form of "liberties," and the church organization was described as the "Liberties the Lord Jesus hath given to the Churches." The preamble to this first Body of Liberties would have been impressive, even had it not come out of the American wilderness:

> The free fruition of such liberties Immunities and priveledges as humanitie, Civilitie, and Christianitie call for as due to every man in his place and proportion without impeachment and Infringement hath ever bene and ever will be the tranquillitie and Stabilitie of Churches and Commonwealths. And the deniall or deprivall thereof, the disturbance if not the ruine of both.

The Puritans' third major problem was what made for a feasible federal organization? How should power be distributed between local and central organs? Congregationalism itself was an attempt to answer this question with specific institutions, to find a means by which churches could extend "the free hand of fellowship" to one another without binding individual churches or individual church-members to particular dogmas or holding them in advance to the decisions of a central body. The practical issues which did not fall under either of the two earlier questions came within this class. What power, if any, had the General Court of the colony over the town of Hingham in its selection of its captain of militia? This was the occasion when one of the townspeople "professeth he will die at sword's point, if he might not have the choice of his own officers." Or, what was the power of the central government to call a church synod? The deputies of the towns (in a dispute over the character of their union which foreshadowed the issues of the Revolution and the Civil War) were willing to consider an invitation to send delegates, but objected to a command.

All the circumstances of New England life —tradition, theology, and the problems of the new world—combined to nourish concern with such practical problems. It is easy to agree with Lechford's grudging compliment that "wiser men then they, going into a wildernesse to set up another strange government differing from the setled government here, might have falne into greater errors then they have done."

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A GOODLY TREE

Sacred and Profane History

ERICH and RAEL ISAAC

SHORTLY before World War II, and well before the days of the Egyptian-Israeli conflict, the Egyptian ship "Zamzam" steamed into New York harbor with a worthless cargo which, a few days earlier, would have netted the Jewish booksellers of Canal Street and various other enterprising merchants a profit of thousands of dollars. The ship showed no gaping wounds; the log reported no accidents; the worst that had happened was a delay of a few days. But in this case time was money. The ship's cargo consisted of the "*Citrus Medica* var. *ethrog* Engl., a fragrant golden oval or oblong fruit somewhat larger than a lemon with a small stem at the base and a slight knobby projection at the head." This fruit is familiar to Jews as the *etrog,* and while it is supremely valuable to them for a single week, commanding prices ranging from six dollars for a scrawny specimen to thirty for an exceptionally handsome one, and averaging eighteen dollars apiece, it is worthless for the rest of the year. Only during the Feast of Booths, Succoth, is the use of the etrog obligatory for ritual celebration. Chances are that a similar shipping delay occurred at least once before in history, for "an etrog after Succoth" is a Yiddish byword for something absolutely without value.

While religious Jews today will go to considerable trouble and expense to obtain an etrog, their anxieties and difficulties are minor compared with the anguish suffered by Jews in previous centuries—especially those communities located north of the area where the etrog grew—when it came time to acquire the fruit.

The danger of the long trips from Italy, Greece, or Catalonia to Frankfort or Prague cast an aura of romance on the traders in *etrogim.* We know of one family—the Spaniers of Frankfort—who for generations were in the business of importing etrogim from Spain (hence the name Spanier), and whose house, occupied by the family for one hundred and fifty years, bore the title "The Golden Apple" in honor of the trade. So important economically did trade in etrogim become in the Middle Ages that one of the terms of the peace treaty imposed upon the defeated Republic of Pisa in 1329 by the Guelph League of Tuscany (led by Florence) forbade her to continue her commerce in etrogim. Presumably Florence and her allies intended to take over the flourishing trade with Jewish merchants from Germany, Austria, and Poland as one of the spoils of victory.

To what can we trace the importance of the etrog in the life of the Jewish community? Leviticus 23:40 says concerning the Feast of Booths: *And you shall take to yourselves on the first day the fruit of a goodly tree, palm fronds, the bough of a thick tree and willows of the brook and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days.* There is no explicit reference here to the etrog, only to "the fruit of a goodly tree."

The Talmud advanced various arguments to prove that the traditional identification of "the fruit of a goodly tree" as the etrog was based on Scripture. The Biblical phrase, said the rabbis, implied that both fruit and tree had to be goodly, which meant that

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THE fruit familiar to Jews as the *etrog* has a long and complex history which is here traced by ERICH and RAEL ISAAC. Erich Isaac, born in Germany and formerly resident in Israel, is a specialist in the geography of religion, and teaches geography at Temple University. Rael Isaac is on the staff of the English division of Pennsylvania State University's extension school.

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the taste of wood and fruit must be similar; only the etrog lived up to both specifications. Etymological evidence was produced by several rabbis, one of whom postulated (mistakenly) that the word "goodly" (*hadar,* literally "splendor"), came from *dirah,* meaning "dwelling." The fact that the etrog is not a seasonal fruit, and that the citron tree can be said to provide a dwelling for the etrog all year round, was cited by the rabbi as proof that the etrog was virtually called by name in the commandment. Misguided etymological enthusiasm inspired another rabbi to conclude that *hadar* was really the Greek *hudor* ("water"); since the citron tree is often in need of irrigation, the fruit in question must be the etrog. The rabbi neglected to mention that many other orchard trees are commonly irrigated. An unsophisticated attempt to cut the Gordian knot was made by yet other rabbis who asserted that the word *hadar* was the Aramaic equivalent of the Hebrew word *etrog,* despite the fact that *hadar* everywhere else in the Bible means "goodly" or "glory."

Another type of interpretation was advanced by the Aggadists, who claimed that the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was the etrog tree. This was indicated by the description of the tree in Genesis 3:6 where ". . . the woman saw that the tree was good for food. . . ." Said Rav Abba of Acco: "What other tree is there whose wood and fruit are both edible? It can only be the etrog."*

In approaching the problem of "the fruit of a goodly tree," one group of rabbis, which included Maimonides, boldly converted what was apparently the chief weakness of the Biblical phrase into a source of strength. These rabbis claimed that there was never any doubt that the goodly tree of the Bible was the etrog and that the lack of specific reference only proved the absolute necessity of oral tradition, without which we could not know the true significance of the divinely ordained command. Finally, Eleazar of Worms, a rabbi with a mathematical flair, scientifically and conclusively proved that the fruit of the commandment was the etrog by showing that the numerical value of the Hebrew letters spelling out "fruit of a goodly tree" was the same as of those in the word *etrogim.*

WHILE discussion of the etrog's relation to the Bible's "goodly tree" died down after the Middle Ages, the matter was never totally abandoned. In fact, only recently S. Tolkowsky, a Palestinian historian of citrus culture, has advanced the thesis that Leviticus referred not to the etrog but to the *dar* tree, the *ha-* in front of the noun being the definite article. The *dar* tree, or *Cedrus Deodara,* is a giant cedar and a holy tree of India. The fruit of a goodly tree, on this theory, was the cedar cone which was also used in Assyrian ritual. Tolkowsky's theory is based upon the assumption that Leviticus could not have intended the etrog since that tree did not grow in Palestine in Biblical times. The citron, Tolkowsky holds, was introduced into Palestine in the 2nd century B.C.E. and substituted for the cedar cone by Simon Maccabeus in whose time a coin bearing the imprint of the fruit (the earliest evidence in Jewish records for the etrog) is believed to have been struck. Simon Maccabeus, according to Tolkowsky, introduced the etrog presumably in order to purify the Feast of Booths from the pagan implications of the cedar cone.

However, it is by no means certain that the citron was brought into the eastern Mediterranean at such a late date. Most recent findings indicate that the citron originated not in India or Southwest Asia, as was formerly thought, but in East Africa or

*Of course, Western civilization generally accepts the apple as the fruit of the forbidden tree, and this view also derives from Aggadic material. The Talmudic commentators of medieval Europe reconciled the two traditions by identifying the apple with an etrog, citing the Aramaic translation of Song of Songs 2:3 where apple is translated as "etrog." We may perhaps explain the translator's mistake by the old popular notion of the etrog as the symbol of love, a notion found from East Asia to the Mediterranean. Among Christians, *Adamsapfel* ("Adam's apple") and *Todesapfel* (or "death apple," in recognition of the fall), in late medieval German usage, meant etrog.

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Southern Arabia, and there is ample proof of very early connections by land and sea between these areas and Mesopotamia—connections which would have permitted the introduction of the etrog in Palestine considerably before the 5th century B.C.E.

Internal evidence from the text of Leviticus also argues against the thesis that *hadar* means the *dar* tree. "The fruit of a goodly tree" is one of a list of items in this verse, and it is unlikely from a stylistic point of view that the definite article would be employed for only one of the objects while the others listed parallel to it are without the article. Finally, the coin bearing the imprint of the etrog—which Tolkowsky asserted marked the initial use of the fruit—was not struck in the time of Simon Maccabeus but two hundred years later in the period of the first Jewish war against Rome when, according to all available evidence, the etrog had already been in use for some time.

Indeed, Rabbi Akiba, who lived in the period of that war, was supposed to have grown an etrog so large he was forced to carry it on his shoulder when he displayed it to his fellow rabbis to prove that an etrog should not be used as a standard measure of size. Although we do not know the size of the ordinary etrog of the period, we know that it was considerably smaller than Rabbi Akiba's—at least small enough to serve as a convenient hand weapon. In the first part of the 1st century B.C.E., Alexander Jannai, the Hasmonean king, was greeted by thousands of his irate subjects on Succoth in the Temple with a shower of etrogim. An unfortunate Babylonian rabbi had a similiar experience, but he was not equipped with the same means of retaliation as Alexander, who slaughtered six thousand of his subjects on the spot.

By the 1st century C.E. the etrog had become so important in Jewish religious observance that it moved with the Jews outside Palestine wherever the environment permitted. In this way the tree spread through North Africa and Asia Minor, the Aegean, Greece, and Italy. To what extent the etrog was responsible for making Jews the expert horticulturists of Mediterranean Europe we do not know. We do know that they were noted for this art and modified the Mediterranean landscape through their practice of it.

The etrog played an extremely important role in the development of the entire Mediterranean citrus culture. The Jewish obsession with the etrog made the transition from cultivation of the etrog to citrus culture in general comparatively simple. It was thanks to the Jews that the peoples of Mediterranean lands grew to accept the citron as edible, and this acceptance in turn made them receptive to the rest of the citrus family. We know that when, at an early period, the citron had been encountered by Mediterranean travelers in foreign lands, it had been considered inedible. Theophrastus of Eresos, the favored pupil of Aristotle, on his trip to Babylon witth Alexander the Great about 310 B.C.E., described the citron as a fruit which could not be eaten. By the 2nd century C.E., however, the Greek physician Galen was writing recipes for its use.

In the intervening centuries the citron had spread with the numerous Jewish communities which formed throughout the Mediterranan. Up to the 17th century traders who brought etrogim to Jewish communities in extra-Mediterranean Europe were also the traders in those other branches of the citron family for which a European demand developed.

The further history of the etrog was influenced by the altered pattern of Jewish settlement in Europe. Jews established flourishing communities well north of the line where the etrog can be grown; at the same time, the political and economic conditions of feudal Europe made it virtually impossible for the Jews to obtain etrogim outside of Italy. Furthermore, it was at this period that the Jews ceased to be horticulturists, a circumstance giving rise to a new set of problems. Since Jews no longer grew the etrog, they no longer had confidence that etrogim were grown in the fashion permitted by Jewish law. An indication of the growing concern over this problem can be found in the

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sudden rush of rabbinical responsa in the 16th century forbidding the use of the fruit of the grafted citron.

According to Jewish law grafting is prohibited. The prohibition is derived from a Biblical command against sowing in one field seeds of different types and was applied by the rabbis to the grafting of trees. Grafting in the case of the etrog was particularly sacrilegious because it meant that a fruit which merely superficially appeared to be an etrog was employed for a holy purpose to which the etrog alone had been divinely designated. Italian Jews were able to detect grafted etrogim from their own area on sight, but not from orchards outside their immediate vicinity. Clearly the Jew beyond the growing range of the etrog was totally unable to determine whether the etrog he received was acceptable or not, and partly because of the wide practice of grafting in Italy, the attempt was made more and more to tap areas of supply beyond the offending country.

Further complications arose from the difficulties of transport and the monopolistic trading practices of Jewish merchants who obtained royal or ducal charters by paying substantial fees. The plight of many Jewish communities at Succoth became so severe that more than one rabbi—Mehr Eisenstadt I, Moshe Isserles, and Benjamin A. Slonik, to cite a few examples—permitted the use of grafted or dried-out etrogim preserved from the previous year when others were totally unobtainable. In its extremity the entire community of Kuttenplan, now Chadova Plana in western Bohemia, went so far as to tax itself in 1576 in order to obtain a single etrog.

Rabbi Asher Levy, who lived in Reichshofen, Alsace, in the early 17th century, recorded an interesting incident in his memoirs. Two days before Succoth he and his entire community were without a single etrog. Christian peasants approached the rabbi with two small green objects which Rabbi Levy feared to accept because they were of less than the permitted size. However, when Asher Levy arose after a tormented night of reflection and doubt he decided to buy the "etrogim" after all since it was clearly a case of these or nothing at all. For an entire week the two pitiful objects were used not only by the community of Reichshofen but by three neighboring communities as well to which they were tenderly carried each day. Rabbi Asher Levy's doubts, however, did not diminish with the days. At the close of the holiday he shut himself up with his "etrogim" and carefully sliced them in two. He found the secret of their small size—the "etrogim" were unripe lemons.

THERE were in the 17th century three major sources supplying the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe with etrogim: Spanish Catalonia in the west; the coasts and islands of the Ligurian and Tyrrhenian Sea, especially Corsica, in the middle; and, in the east, the Adriatic shores of the Ottoman Empire and the Venetian islands of Corfu, Cephalonia, and Zante. Genoa served as the market place for etrogim from the first two areas and Venice channeled the trade from the last. The reputation of the etrogim of Genoa ranked highest in the eyes of Jewish communities because the majority sold there came from Corsica where they grew in wild and ungrafted profusion.

Beginning with the 18th century, when the Catalonian trade declined and trade through Genoa became more difficult, Trieste increasingly took the place of Genoa as the great central market place of etrogim. With the creation of the First Republic in France and the swift rise of Napoleon, boundary lines between French and Austrian possessions hardened so that Jews in Austrian territories had no choice but to use the Adriatic sources. But the Adriatic trade presented problems of its own, what with the islands of Corfu, Cephalonia, and Zante, the main sources for etrogim, changing from Venetian to French to Russian to English occupation within the space of twelve years. Of all the places supplying etrogim, only the coastal areas of Ottoman Albania and Epirus did not change hands. Here the Sultan monopolized the growing of etrogim

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and kept close supervision over the purity of the tree stock. The etrogim of Parga, where the Sultan maintained orchards, achieved a reputation as high as those of Corsica. These etrogim and others from the eastern Adriatic region were shipped largely via Corfu to Trieste.

The trouble began when the Sultan let his monopoly lapse around 1840. How was it possible now to determine whether the etrogim had been grafted upon lemon stock? An indication of the mounting concern of Jewish communities throughout Europe, following the Sultan's abandonment of his monopoly and the consequent mushrooming of new orchards in the inland provinces of Ioannina, Prevesa, and Arta in what is now Greece, was the publication in the Galician town of Lvov in 1846 of a collection of responsa on the problem. The rabbis were unanimously of the opinion that the etrogim received from the area could no longer be trusted. They explained that the rabbi of Corfu gave his seal of approval to the etrogim from the mainland, although he had no knowledge of the conditions under which they were grown. Under the circumstances the rabbis advised that tradition be followed and that Jews continue to buy only the etrogim of Parga, or, if available, those of Corsica or North Africa. The practical difficulty in the way of following this advice turned out to be that all the etrogim from the area were shipped to Corfu where Greek traders crated them together indiscriminately. Eventually all the etrogim from the region became known under the single title of the Corfu etrog, although etrogim from Corfu itself were not the largest component in the trade.

The Corfu etrog fell into disrepute not only from the Halachic standpoint but also as a result of the practices of Greek merchants who dumped etrogim into the Adriatic in order to induce an artificial scarcity and force up prices. This they were the more ready to do because the credulous merchants were convinced that Jewish superstition dictated that a Jew who did not use a Corfu etrog each year would die before the next. Disgust with the Corfu etrog was aggravated in the following decades by the anti-Semitic outrages committed by the people of the island. Under Napoleon Jews had been granted full civil equality, but under English and subsequently under Greek rule outbreaks against the Jews recurred periodically with government concurrence or even connivance. Prohibitions against the Corfu etrog began to be issued not only by the rabbis of Eastern Europe, but also by such notables as Chief Rabbi Nathan Marcus Adler of England and the rabbis of Hamburg, Mainz, and Würzburg. Determined to end the reign of the Corfu etrog, Isaac Elchanan Spektor, one of the greatest Talmudic authorities of the age, repeated his prohibition year after year until his death.

The ritual murder accusation of 1891 on Corfu and the subsequent pogroms clinched the case against the Corfu etrog for most Jews, and such famed teachers as Naftali Zevi Yehuda Berlin (head of the Yeshiva of Volozhin) and Rabbi Shmuel Mohilever (the outstanding representative of religious Zionism) followed the example of Isaac Elchanan Spektor in prohibiting the Corfu etrog. An attempt was unsuccessfully made in Russia to circulate a complete list of all the rabbis who joined forces to ban the Corfu etrog. Traders in Corfu etrogim, however, managed to bribe the Russian censorship to forbid the publication of the list, so that it did not appear until 1892 when it was printed in—of all places—Newark, New Jersey.

THE long debate concerning the acceptability of the Corfu etrog had alerted Jews to the question of grafting, and when Palestine began to replace the Corfu area as the source of the fruit, each Jew was determined to make absolutely sure that his etrog had not the remotest relationship to a lemon. Palestinian citrons began to figure in the European market in the late 1850's. These etrogim, however, met considerable opposition from certain Orthodox communities on the grounds that they were grafted. To counteract this unfavorable propaganda,

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a group of Palestinian rabbis investigated the situation and published a volume to inform world Jewry in which areas grafting was practiced and which exporters could not be relied upon, thus by implication putting the seal of approval upon the rest.

The rabbis denied that grafting was universal in Palestine; on the contrary, they asserted, the very desolation of the country and the lack of enterprise of its inhabitants, greatly as these must grieve a Jew, had yet the important advantage of insuring the purity of her etrogim. The etrog grew wild upon the ruins of Israel's ancient grandeur. In Jaffa, alas, it was reputed that the inhabitants were more enterprising and grafted etrogim grew upon the ruins. Citron cuttings had been imported from Greece and grafted on lemon stock in the environs of Jaffa. With consummate villainy, Sephardic exporters had shipped this fruit to Europe under the title of Corfu etrogim.

Refusing to rest content with secondhand evidence, this group of rabbinic sleuths ventured forth from the security of Jerusalem into the groves themselves to establish the facts. At the first Jaffa grove they encountered an Arab owner who initially refused to say whether his citrons were grafted or not. On consideration, however, he asked shrewdly, "Which do the Jews prefer?" The rabbis, equally astute, returned: "Both. Some like grafted and some don't." Reassured, the Arab confided that all the etrogim, not only in his orchard but in all Jaffa, were grafted. The rabbis then inquired how grafted might be distinguished from pure stock. The owner showed them signs on a young tree, but said that on an older tree it was often impossible to distinguish. The rabbis repeated their trip to various other orchards in the neighborhood with the same result.

Flushed with victory the rabbis sought out the Sephardic rabbi of Jaffa and hauled him off to the orchards in order to demonstrate the depravity of his congregation who knowingly traded in this merchandise. In the meantime, however, the Sephardic traders had learned of the activities of the investigating committee and had warned the Arab citron growers to say nothing and to keep the prying rabbis off their property. Accordingly, when the rabbis now appeared at an orchard, they were met by a defiant servant girl who told them instantly that the owner was away and she had been instructed under no circumstances to tell them that the citrons were grafted. At this point, a small army of Sephardic traders with the owner of the orchard in their midst burst upon the scene. A violent altercation ensued in which the traders insisted that the etrogim were not grafted and there was no way of distinguishing grafted from pure stock anyway. The indignant rabbis pointed out the signs of which they had recently learned, whereupon the traders replied that this was what they had meant. Since grafted could be distinguished from pure stock they were careful to sell only the pure. The rabbis departed in despair at such obvious duplicity and left the unfortunate Sephardic rabbi to deal with the iniquities of his flock, while they went home to write their book.

While the Palestinian etrog steadily climbed in popularity, the Corfu etrog still did not lack persistent champions. The main body of its supporters was made up of certain groups of Hasidim who apparently considered pogroms and possible grafting of less moment than opposition to prevailing Misnagdic views. Traders in Corfu etrogim embarked upon desperate propaganda campaigns to keep their market and fully exploited the rift in Jewish ranks at the same time as they instituted a search for markets in remote lands uninformed of, or at least less involved with, the Corfu debate. The United States was such a market and traders in Corfu etrogim hawked their wares in New York only to meet, greatly to their chagrin, the same determined resistance they had encountered in much of Europe.

The gauntlet was thrown down by Ephraim Deinard of Newark, New Jersey, originally of Latvian Courland, and a professional traveler and writer. He published a broadside entitled "God's War Against Amalek" in 1892. It opens with an impas-

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sioned denunciation, which inevitably loses in translation from the original Hebrew:

> The shriek of the children of Israel on Corfu, the island of blood, pierces heaven. These cursed beasts, these Greeks, children of Antiochus the tyrant, after two thousand years have still not gorged themselves sufficiently upon the blood of our fathers. Not a year passes, but these cannibals slander us with accusations of ritual murder in all the countries of Greece, Turkey, and Russia. Before our eyes runs the blood of our brethren in Salonica, Smyrna, Odessa, Alexandria, Port Said, and Corfu.

As for the New York traders in Greek etrogim, Deinard wrote:

> . . . they are traders in the blood of Israel . . . and since there is hardly a man in Europe who will touch them [the etrogim] they bought these etrogim dripping with the blood of the sons of Zion. . . . These circumcised anti-Semites . . . have connived with importers from Trieste and a group of Galician Jews . . . to mislead the people of God.

To give villainy a place and name Deinard exposed the "robbers' hideout"—185 East Broadway.

A cautionary note was sounded by several rabbis equally concerned with the implications of the Corfu pogroms, but more thoroughly the products of Western emancipation and possessing what they considered a more comprehensive view of the anti-Semitic problem as a whole. Rabbi Hermann Adler of London, the son of the Chief Rabbi who had been one of the first to ban the Corfu etrog, argued that while the emotions which Jews now felt toward the Greeks of Corfu were entirely justified, a boycott against Corfu would merely play into the hands of the anti-Semites who warned against Jewish economic power. Rabbi Israel Hildesheimer of Berlin adopted the humanitarian assumption that all Greek merchants were not wicked and it was therefore contrary to Jewish teachings to make the innocent suffer for the sins of the others.

But their findings to the contrary notwithstanding, Jews continued to look to Palestine for their etrogim and at the turn of the century a Fruit of the Goodly Tree Association was set up by Palestinian Jewish citron growers. This organization was supported by Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, then Chief Rabbi of Jaffa, who sought to give a Halachic basis for the purchase of Palestinian etrogim. The Biblical phrase says: "And you shall take to yourselves . . . fruit of a goodly tree"; the Talmud amplified "you shall take to yourselves" to mean "you shall take purely—that is, not steal"; and Kook went further to say that this meant "you shall take from your own"—in other words from Jews and Jewish soil.

The wars of the 20th century, natural limitations of supply, and the preferences of individual groups have prevented Palestine from being the sole source of etrogim. Today the citron is grown on Greek islands such as Crete, Naxos, and Corfu; in southern Italy in the regions of Cosenza, Salerno, and Potenza; and in California, Morocco, Tunisia, Yemen, and Israel. In the United States today we find the main importers of North African etrogim to be Hasidim. Some of the North African etrogim are far from living up to the early rabbinic ideal according to which both fruit and tree had to be goodly. These etrogim are black and shriveled. The Hasidim argue that the very unattractiveness of the fruit is proof of its purity: no grafted fruit could look so awful.

ALTHOUGH Jewish devotion to the etrog has not diminished over the centuries, the etrog itself has perhaps subtly changed in significance. No longer primarily the concrete beautiful fruit described in Leviticus and the Talmud, it has become for many an ideal, almost a schematic object. The etrog is often considered as a collection of attributes—i.e., it is not grafted; the fruit is flawless; the stem is intact—rather than as a single essence. It is for this reason that a dark and shriveled fruit may today be preferred over the traditionally firm and golden etrog.

An outsider, reading of the multiplicity of rabbinic interpretations, the endless squabbles, and the final seeming *reductio ad ab-*

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surdum of using a patently ugly object as "the fruit of the goodly tree," may well ask what the fuss is all about. Is the etrog just an excuse for the Jews to exercise their passion for the difficult, for the formal, and, above all, for argument? Such a view has been expressed before—in the 4th century, for example, Methodios Eubulios, a Christian bishop and subsequent martyr, wrote that it was both shameful and foolish for the Jews to make such an issue over a lemon.

But although this definition may seem adequate to other men, to the Jew the etrog is not merely the "*Citrus Medica* var. *ethrog* Engl." To the Jew the etrog is a tree rooted in eternity, its creation antedating man, from whose branches sprang the fruit which, in bringing the end to man's sojourn in Eden, gave us human life and history as we know it. According to one midrash the etrog is "the heart of man"; according to a Hasidic teacher "the orb of the world." The etrog is a national as well as a universal symbol to the Jew. Its fragrance was in Jacob's clothes when Isaac blessed him, bestowing upon the people of Israel, through Jacob, its identity, its rule over nations, and the favor of the Lord. Again, the etrog is the beloved in Israel's great poem of love, the Song of Solomon. The etrog calls up the glory of the Second Temple when the instrument of prayer became the fierce expression of a people's longing for freedom, hurled literally in the teeth of tyrannical power. Finally the etrog symbolizes the continuity of Jewish history and its common aspiration, binding together the disparate geographic units of the Diaspora over the centuries.

As symbol of world history and Jewish national persistence within it; as the finite object in the natural world revealing God's divine and infinite mystery, the etrog is clearly an object of the highest significance. Man must therefore strive to make the etrog conform as fully as possible to its divine essence by following the specifications laid down by tradition and law. The trouble is great but the reward is high. If the fruit is the true etrog, for seven days each year, when the Jew takes in one hand the palm branch and in the other the etrog, he will be united in a chain of intimate association through Jacob with his people, through Adam with the race of man, and, ultimately, through the fulfillment of a cherished commandment, with his God.

FRIDAY NIGHT CANTATA

(While listening to Bach's Cantata No. 51.)

FLORENCE VICTOR

Unfit for worship, still I learned each prayer,
And hoping that the rabbi couldn't tell
It was the music which I loved so well,
And not his God, and not his patent stare
Which broke the spell, I shook hands in despair
And fled the synagogue, an infidel
Who craved only a song, who feared no hell
But speech or silence, sanctity left bare.

My heresy full-grown, I often now
Stand waif-like while the congregation prays;
Idolater of sound, I must profane
The joy in God each offering displays,
And yet alone on Friday night I bow
To something even Bach could not explain.

Florence Victor was born in Brooklyn in 1935. Her verse has appeared previously in Commentary.

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A PLAQUE ON THE VIA MAZZINI

A Story

GIORGIO BASSANI

AT FIRST nobody recognized Geo Josz when he reappeared in Ferrara in August 1945, the sole survivor of the one hundred and eighty-three members of the Jewish community whom the Germans had deported in the autumn of 1943 and whom most people in the city, not unreasonably, believed to have been long ago exterminated in the gas chambers.

To tell the truth, nobody even remembered who he was. Unless—some added with a doubtful air—unless he was the son of a certain Angelo Josz, the well-known textile merchant who, though initially "favored" as a reward for "patriotic merit" (he had been a Fascist in his youth), had not been able to save either himself or his family from the great roundup in 1943.

Yes, Geo must be one of those remote boys—not more than ten of them in all—who even in 1938, having been forced to interrupt their studies and, as a result, also having stopped visiting their schoolmates' homes, were rarely seen about after that and had grown up with rather odd looks on their faces, somewhat frightened, wild, and contemptuous looks which made people prefer to forget them entirely.

But apart from all this: who could have recognized in that man of indeterminate age, so fat he seemed swollen, wearing a lambskin shako on his shaven skull and togged out in a kind of grab-bag of all the known and unknown uniforms of the moment—who could have recognized in him the frail seven-year-old boy or the nervous, thin, scared adolescent of several years before? And if a certain Geo Josz had ever been born and actually existed, if he too—as he asserted—had been part of that file of one hundred and eighty-three ghosts devoured by Buchenwald, Auschwitz, Mauthausen, Dachau, etc., how could one believe that he, he alone, should come back from there now and appear—bizarrely dressed, it is true, but nevertheless very much alive—to tell all about himself and the others who had not come back and certainly never would?

But let us proceed in orderly fashion; and before going any further, let us pause for a moment at the incident involving the plaque affixed to the synagogue's facade.

Told now, the scene may seem a bit incredible; one has only to imagine it played out against what to us is the so usual, so familiar background of Via Mazzini (not even the war has touched it: as though to prove that nothing could possibly happen here, ever!), that street, in other words, which starts from Piazza delle Erbe and, skirting the old ghetto—with the church of San Maurelio at the beginning and, halfway, Via Vittoria's narrow fissure, and then, a little farther ahead, the synagogue's red façade and the double, facing ranks of a hundred dry-goods stores and ground-floor warehouses, each harboring in its odor-impregnated half-darkness a little, cautious soul imbued with mercantile irony and skepticism—connects the decrepit, twisting alleyways of Ferrara's medieval center with the splendid avenues, badly damaged by the bombardments, of the Renaissance and modern sections of the city.

Immersed in the blaze and silence of an August mid-day, Via Mazzini lay empty, deserted, intact. And so it appeared also to the young workman who, after climbing up on a small scaffolding, his head covered

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GIORGIO BASSANI was born in Bologna in 1916 of a Jewish family of Ferrara, and spent his youth in the latter town, with whose history he thus became familiar during the period when Italy was under Fascist rule. He participated in the Resistance movement, was jailed in 1943, and later moved to Rome where he published poetry and worked as an editor on the well-known literary review *Botteghe Oscure*. The present story, here given in a shortened version, is his first to be printed in an American publication. It was translated from the Italian by Raymond Rosenthal.

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with a paper cap, had begun bustling around the marble slab they had given him to set in place, two meters above the ground, against the dusty brick of the synagogue. A peasant he was, compelled by the war to citify himself and improvise a trade as a mason (gradually, as he worked, he was penetrated by a sense of solitude and vague fear: he knew that the plaque commemorated something, but he had been careful not to read what was written on it), and from the first his figure had been lost in the gulf of light that filled the street, failing to annul its emptiness at that hour.

The first to stop were two youths, bearded and bespectacled Partisans, with knee-length shorts, red handkerchiefs around their necks, and tommy-guns slung over their shoulders. A little later they were joined by a priest, in spite of the heat wearing his heavy black cassock with its sleeves rolled back—he had a strangely belligerent, almost defiant manner—and exposing his white, hairy forearms. And then, afterwards, a sixty-year-old middleclass codger with a beard the color of salt-and-pepper, an obsessed air, his shirt open over his scrawny chest and restless Adam's apple, who, after he had begun to read aloud what was presumably inscribed on the plaque (there was name after name, though, so it seemed, not all of them Italian ones), abruptly broke off and exclaimed emphatically: "One hundred and eighty-three out of four hundred," as if even for the mason, Aristide Podetti, who was in Ferrara by chance and had no intention of staying any longer than necessary, those names and numbers could evoke God knows what sort of memories and emotion.

Poor Aristide, he was so determined not to know a thing, that feeling someone lightly touch his ankle ("Geo Josz?" a mocking voice said, at the same time), he quickly swung around, his eyes hard with anger.

A short, stocky man with a strange fur hat on his head stood in front of him. With upraised arm he was pointing at the plaque. How fat the man was! He looked swollen with water, like someone that's been drowned. But apparently he was not to be feared, for he was laughing, as though he wanted to win his sympathy.

"Geo Josz?" the man repeated, still pointing at the plaque, though now become serious.

Then he laughed again. But immediately, as though repentant, sprinkling his remarks with many "please's" in the German manner, he declared that he was sorry—"you must believe me"—to have spoiled everything with his interference which, he was prepared to admit, had all the look of a *faux pas*. Ah, yes, he sighed, the plaque would have to be done over, for the Geo Josz to whom it was in some part dedicated was none other than himself, present there in the flesh. Unless—and, saying this, his blue eyes gazed about as if to take possession of an image of Via Mazzini—unless the committee responsible for this act of homage, accepting his reappearance as a hint from destiny itself, wished to renounce the idea of a commemorative plaque altogether, which—he now sneered—though it did have the unquestionable advantage, being located at that very busy spot, of almost compelling people to read it, still, its grave disadvantage was that it effected an unsuitable transformation in the simple, straightforward facade of "our dear synagogue," one of the few things—including Via Mazzini itself—which the war, thank God, had so completely spared that it remained just as "before," something one ("Yes, my friend, I say this also for you who, I presume, are not a Jew") could still count on.

"It's somewhat as though you, with your face and your hands, were forced to—what should I say?—forced to wear a dinner jacket."

And then he pushed out his own hands, indescribably calloused, but with backs so white that a five-figured serial number, tattooed a little above one wrist in the softish, boiled-looking flesh, could be read quite clearly—the five figures preceded by the single letter *J*.

II

And so, with a look that was not threatening but rather ironic and amused (his watery blue eyes looked up frigidly, as though, pallid and puffed up as he was, he had just emerged from the depths of the sea), Geo Josz reappeared among us in Ferrara.

He came from far away, much farther away than the place he had actually come from! And then, all of a sudden, turning up like that, where he had been born. . . .

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It seems that it had happened as follows, more or less. The military truck he had boarded had taken him in a few hours from Brenner Pass to the Po Valley and, after leaving the ferry at Pontelagoscuro, had slowly climbed the left bank of the Po; and there, at the very top, after a last, almost reluctant bump, his gaze fell on the vast, forgotten plain of his childhood and adolescence. Down there below him, a trifle to the left, should be Ferrara. But was it Ferrara? he asked both himself and the driver beside him. Was Ferrara that dark polygon of dusty stone which, save for the Castle's four towers that rose up aerial and unreal at its center, seemed to be reduced to a kind of lugubrious flatiron that pressed down heavily on the fields? Where were the green, luminous, ancient trees that used to stand along the crest of the truncated city walls? Only two years had passed since he had been deported, but they were two years that counted as twenty or two hundred.

He had come back when no one any longer expected him. And now, what did he want? To answer such a question calmly—with that calm which is required for understanding and pitying what at first had been probably no more than a simple, even if unexpressed, desire to live—we perhaps needed another time, another city.

At any rate we needed other people, a little less terrified than certain gentlemen who were still, as always, the touchstones of the city's opinions (among whom, besides a few big merchants and landowners, were numbered many of Ferrara's most authoritative professional men, in short, the core of what had been before the war our so-called ruling class), people who had been forced to "enroll" more or less in a body in the defunct, last-ditch "Social Republic" of Salò established by the Fascists, people who could not resign themselves to standing aside even for a little while, who saw everywhere plots, enemies, even political rivals. It's true, they *had* accepted the notorious party membership card. But they had been prompted to do it by purely civic feeling. And, in any case, they hadn't done it before that fatal day, December 15, 1943, which had seen the simultaneous execution of eleven of the town's citizens and out of which began in Italy the never sufficiently deprecated "fraternal strife." Riddled with bullets right opposite the arcade of the Exchange Café—where the corpses had lain for an entire day, guarded closely by soldiers with tommy-guns at the ready—with their own eyes they had seen the bodies of those "unlucky ones," flung in the dirty melting snow like so many bundles. Yes, that's how they all talked *now*, all of them driven by the desire to convince others and themselves that, if they had made a political mistake, they had done it more out of generosity than from fear. In any event, *they* surely couldn't be considered the types most apt to recognize in others that simplicity and normality of aim, that famous "purity" of deed and intention which, when it came to themselves, they could never forget for even a moment.

As for the specific case of the man in the shako, even assuming that he was Geo Josz—and they were, however, by no means convinced!—assuming this, they still had to distrust him. That fat of his, all that fat, made them suspicious. Of course, it was *starvation fat*. But who, if not Geo himself, could have spread such a story in an awkward attempt to justify a robust good health that was in such singular contrast with what was said about German concentration camps? There was no such thing as "starvation fat," it was a pure and simple fabrication. In truth Geo's fat meant one of two things: either that one did not suffer in the *Lager* so tremendously from hunger as the progaganda maintained, or else that Geo had enjoyed particularly favorable conditions. One fact was certain: under that fur cap, behind those lips curled in a perpetual smile, there could only be room—they could swear it—for hostile thoughts and plans.

And what was to be said about the others—a minority, as a matter of fact—who remained barricaded in their houses, their ears pricked for the slightest sound from outside, the very image of fear and hatred?

Among this last group there was one man who had offered to preside, a big tricolored sash plastered across his chest, at the public auction of the property confiscated from the Jewish community, which also included the synagogue's silver chandeliers and the ancient vellums of the Torah; and that other man who, setting on his white-haired head his black, skull-adorned Fascist uniform cap, had taken part in a special Tribunal responsible for several executions.

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But of course there's no way to reason with fear and hatred. If, to return to Geo Josz himself, they had really wished to understand something of what was going on inside of him, it would have been enough to go back to his first extraordinary appearance in Ferrara, indeed to what happened after that singular scene when, right beside the entrance to the synagogue on Via Mazzini, he had offered his hands—not without sarcasm—to the young mason's stunned inspection.

You may perhaps recall the gentleman of about sixty with the sparse, grizzled beard and the scrawny neck, who was one of the first to stop before the memorial marble slab and had at one point raised his high-pitched voice ("One hundred and eighty-three out of four hundred" he had cried out proudly) to comment on its inscription.

Well, after watching along with the others what was happening, this gentleman had suddenly pushed his way with wild gestures through the small crowd and thrown himself on the neck of the man in the shako, kissing him noisily on both cheeks, thus proving to be the first person unmistakably to recognize in him Geo Josz. And Josz, whose hands were still outstretched, said very coldly: "With that absurd goatee my dear Uncle Daniele, I almost didn't know you"—a remark which not only revealed the relationship between him and one of the Josz family's surviving representative citizens (to be precise, his father's brother, who had miraculously escaped the great roundup in November 1943, and had returned to the city at the end of last April), but also the sharp, profound intolerance that he, Geo, had immediately shown for everything that reminded him of the passage of time in Ferrara and for all those changes, however slight, which had been brought about by it.

And so: "Why that beard? Do you really think that beard becomes you?"

It actually seemed that he had nothing else in his head but a wish to examine with a critical eye all the beards of various shapes and sizes that the war had made a commonplace, just as it had the use of the famous forged documents; and since he was not a loquacious type, this was his way of evincing his disapproval, of criticizing.

And there were, of course, a great many beards in what had been the Josz house before the war, where the uncle and nephew showed up that same afternoon; and the low red-stone house, surmounted by a slender Ghibelline tower and so very long that it took up almost a whole side of the short, secluded Via Campofranco, was invaded by a warlike, feudal atmosphere.

The street door was wide open. Outside, sitting on the entrance steps with tommy-guns between their bare legs, or stretched out on the seats of a jeep pulled up against the high wall that separated Via Campofranco from a vast private garden, a dozen Partisans were hanging around, loafing. But there were many more, some carrying voluminous sheafs of paper clutched under their arms, who despite the late afternoon sultriness, restlessly shuttled back and forth, their faces marked with energy and resolve.

So this strange pair—one tall, thin, obsessed-looking; the other fat, slow, sticky with sweat—passed through the portico and instantly attracted the attention of all present—most of them armed, as usual, with a superfluity of hair and beard—who sat there waiting on crude benches set along the wall. They clustered around; and Daniele Josz, who evidently was eager to show his nephew how much at home he was in this environment, was already replying willingly to all questions concerning him and also his companion.

But Geo stared at all those ruddy, bronzed faces that hovered about him, as if he wanted to ferret out some secret that lay behind those beards, some hidden rottenness.

"Aah, you can't get me to swallow this!" his smile said.

Only for a moment did he seem to brighten, when he discovered beyond the portico's iron gate, upright and still gleaming at the center of the plucked little garden that lay out there, a great magnolia tree, brown and flourishing. But this wasn't enough to keep him from repeating, a little later on, upstairs in the office of the young Provincial Secretary of the ANPI* (the same man who two years later was to become the most brilliant young Communist Deputy in Italy) his by now stale observation: "That beard isn't at all becoming, you know that, don't you?"

*Associazione Nazionale Partigiani Italiani—the Partisans' national organization.—Ed.

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So in the embarrassed chill that at once descended on what had until then been, thanks solely to Uncle Daniele, a conversation not without some cordiality, suddenly it became clear what Geo Josz really wanted, the reason for his being there (and if all those who feared him so much had only been there to witness this scene!). This house where they, just like the others before them, those black ones, had installed themselves—this house was his, didn't they remember? By what right had they taken possession of it? He looked menacingly at the typist, who flinched and suddenly ceased pounding the keys, as though he wished to inform her, just her, that he wouldn't be contented with only one room, no, not even this one, so beautiful and sunny, where it was so comfortable to work from dawn to dusk, and perhaps even after dusk, together with that young Partisan chief who seemed so determined, out of the sheer goodness of his heart, to renovate the world.

They were singing, below in the street:

The wind whistles, the tempest howls,
Our shoes are broken, but still we slog on. . .

the song came, impetuous and absurd, through the window that opened on a soft red, very lovely sky.

But the house was his, they musn't fool themselves on that score. Sooner or later he would take it back, all of it.

III

And that's what actually took place, though not right away.

For the time being Geo seemed to be satisfied with a single room—and it certainly wasn't Nino Bottecchiari's office! Instead it was a sort of granary at the top of the tower that rose above the house and to reach it one had to climb not less than a hundred steps which, finally, by means of a rotted little wooden stairway, led directly into it from a cubby-hole of a room below, in the past used as a lumber room. It was Geo himself, in the disgusted tones of a man who resigns himself to the worst, who first mentioned this "compromise." As for the cubby-hole below, that too might prove to be rather useful, for it could, as he intended, provide a lodging for Uncle Daniele.

And it soon became clear that Geo, perched high up there, could observe through his window all that went on in the garden on one side and in Via Campofranco on the other. And since he never left the house and presumably spent the greater part of his day gazing at the vast landscape of red tiles, gardens, and green fields that stretched out at his feet (an immense panorama, now that the great leafy trees on the city walls were no longer there to limit it!), his continual presence soon became a nagging, troubling thought to the occupants of the floors below. The cellars of the Josz house, all opening on the garden, had been transformed since the Black Shirt Brigade's day into secret prison cells about which, even after the liberation, many sinister stories were told in the city. But now, subjected to the vigilance of the guest in the tower, the cells were no longer employed for those purposes of summary, clandestine justice for which they had been created. Now, with Geo Josz settled in that sort of lookout, they couldn't rest easy for even a minute, since that keresone lamp he kept lit all night long—and you could see its feeble reflection gleam through the panes up there until dawn—led one to surmise that he was always alert, that he never slept. It must have been two or three o'clock in the morning when Nino Bottecchiari, who had stayed on till then working in his office and was at last ready to grant himself a little rest, happened, just as he walked out into the street, to raise his eyes to the tower. "You better watch out!" Geo's lamp warned, hung up there in mid-air against the starry sky.

But there was also the possibility that Geo might appear from one minute to the next, as indeed he began to, at all hours of the day, on the stairs or down in the entrance-way, walking past the stares of the permanently assembled Partisans in his impeccable civilian suit of olive-colored gabardine which had almost immediately replaced the shako, leather jacket, and tight trousers in which he had arrived at Ferrara. He walked past the stupefied Partisans without greeting a soul, elegant, immaculately trimmed and shaved, the brim of his brown felt hat tilted on one side of his forehead over an ice-cold eye; and in the widespread uneasiness that followed each of his appearances, he was from the start the unquestioned master of the house, too well-bred to quarrel, but strong in his rights, for

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whom it was enough just to show himself to remind the defaulting, vandalistic tenant that he must leave. It was later, after the 1948 elections, when so many things in Ferrara had by now changed, or, to put it more exactly, had returned to the way they'd been before the war (but meanwhile young Bottecchiari's candidacy for Deputy had been presented just in time to be crowned by the most resounding success), it was then that the ANPI decided to move its headquarters elsewhere. At any rate the truth is that, thanks to Geo Josz's silent implacable activity, the move had been long overdue.

He almost never went out of the house, as if he didn't want them to forget him even for a moment. But this didn't prevent him from putting in an appearance every so often on Via Mazzini, where in September he had arranged for his father's warehouse to be cleared out in view of—as he said—"the obviously more than necessary work of repair preparatory to the resumption of business." Or, more rarely, he walked along Corso Giovecca with the uncertain step of someone advancing into forbidden territory, his spirit torn between the fear of unpleasant encounters and the completely opposed, mordant desire to make these encounters, in the evening promenade he had begun taking again, as animated and lively as ever; or, at the *aperitif* hour, he would slump with a crash—for he always arrived there breathless, streaming with sweat— into his chair at the table in the Exchange Café on Corso Roma, which still remained the city's political center. His attitude of ironic scorn was habitual —and gave no sign of being disarmed by those expressions of cordial welcome, those affectionate "welcome home's" that, after the first moments of uncertainty, he began to receive on all sides.

THERE they came, out of the shops near the one that had been his father's and now was his, their hands extended as though to offer him help or actually to promise, with hyperbolic generosity, their loyal competition to eternity; or, wide as it was, they would purposely traverse Corso Po and with excessive enthusiasm, rendered even more hysterical by the fact that, usually, they knew him only by name, throw their arms around his neck; or they would detach themselves from the bar's counter to come and sit beside him under the yellow awning that protected them so inadequately from the sun and the rubble's dust. He had been at Buchenwald and—the only one!—had come back, after having suffered God knows what physical and moral tortures, after having witnessed God knows what horrors. Well, they were there, at his disposal, all ears, to listen to him. Let him tell his story, and they would never tire of it, prepared even to give up for him that dinner to which they were already being summoned by two strokes of the Castle's clock.

In general all this seemed to amount to equally pathetic excuses for having delayed in recognizing him, for having attempted to reject him, to exclude him once more. It was as though they were saying, in chorus: "You've changed, you know that? My God, you're a grown man now, and then so nicely filled out, so fat. But we too have changed, you see, time has passed for us too . . ." and, meanwhile, they displayed, as testimony to their good faith and proof of the evolution which their "ideas" had undergone during these terrible, decisive years, their duck trousers, their bush-jackets, their rolled-up sleeves, their soft collars without ties, their sandals without socks, but no beards, naturally, for *they* didn't wear them . . . and they were sincere each time they offered themselves to Geo's scrutiny and judgment, and just as sincere afterwards when they complained about his inflexible rejection of them. In the same way that almost everyone in the city was sincere in the conviction—even those who had most to fear from the present and to doubt concerning the future—the conviction that after April 1945, for better or worse, a new age was beginning, at any rate better than the past one which, like a long dream filled with atrocious nightmares, was now ending in bloodshed.

As for Uncle Daniele, who for three months had been living by hook or crook and without regular lodging, the stifling little cubby-hole in the tower had immediately seemed, to his incurable optimism, a marvelous acquisition; and no one was more certain than he that, with the war's end, the golden age of democracy and universal brotherhood was really at hand.

"At last, you can breathe!" he ventured to say the first night he had taken possession of that dank well of his—and he talked

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stretched out on his straw mattress, his hands laced behind his neck. "At last, you can breathe. Aaah!" he repeated in a louder voice. And then: "Doesn't it seem also to you, Geo, that the air in the city is different from before? Things have changed, believe me, not just on the surface, but deep down. These are the miracles wrought by freedom. As for me, I am profoundly convinced. . . ."

What Uncle Daniele was profoundly convinced of seemed, however, of very doubtful interest to Geo, since all reply that he ever let fall through the opening out of which came up both the small wooden stairway and his uncle's impassioned apostrophes was an occasional "Hmm!" or "But really?" which certainly did not encourage the old man to continue. "What in the world will he do now?" the old man asked himself, falling silent, while his eyes turned to the ceiling over which a tireless pair of slippers shuffled back and forth—and truly he didn't know what to think.

It seemed impossible to him that Geo should not share his enthusiasm. Having run away from Ferrara at the time of the armistice, Daniele had spent almost two years as the guest of some peasants, hidden in a remote village in the Appennines between Tuscany and Emilia. And while up there, after the death of his wife who had had to be buried—poor woman, and she so religious!—under a false name in Christian ground, he had joined a Partisan brigade as its political commissar. He had been among the first, sun-tanned and bearded, sitting on the peak of a truck, to enter liberated Ferrara. What unforgettable days! Finding the city half-demolished, it's true, almost unrecognizable, but completely cleared of Fascists—cleared of all those faces, a good number of which Daniele had reason to remember. Yes, this had been for him so complete, so extraordinary a joy! To sit peacefully at the Exchange Café—which, as soon as he returned, he had used as the base of operations for his former, modest insurance business—without anyone frowning and ordering him out, but, on the contrary, making him feel well-liked and surrounded by sympathetic warmth—now that he had at last fulfilled *this* desire, he was even ready to die!

But what about Geo? Was it possible that Geo felt nothing of all this? Could it be that, after having descended into hell and, by a miracle, come up again, his only impulse was to evoke the immobile past?—as was proved by the chilling array of photographs of his dead family (poor Angelo, poor Luce, and little Pietruccio, born only to experience violence and anguish and to end in Buchenwald . . .), photographs that, as he saw one day when he sneaked up to Geo's room, covered all four walls. Could it be, finally, that the only beard in the city to which he did not object was actually Jeremiah Tabet's, that old Fascist, poor Angelo's brother-in-law, who, even after 1938, despite the racial laws and the ostracism that followed them, had continued, though unofficially, to frequent the Merchants' Club for its afternoon bridge game?

The very same evening of Geo's return, he, Daniele, had been unwillingly compelled to accompany his nephew to the Tabet house on Via Roversella, where Daniele hadn't been seen since he had come back to the city. Well, wasn't it inconceivable—the ex-political commissar, the sixty-year-old ex-partisan kept repeating to himself, as, meanwhile, in the room above, his nephew never ceased to walk heavily back and forth—wasn't it inconceivable that Geo, as soon as his Fascist uncle had appeared at an upstairs window, should have let loose a piercing shout, a ridiculously, hysterically emotional, almost savage shout? Why this shout? What did it signify? Did it perhaps mean that the boy, in spite of Buchenwald and the slaughter of all his family, had grown up just like his poor father Angelo who, in his ingenuousness, had been to the end, perhaps even to the door of the gas chamber, a "patriot," as Daniele had so many times heard him profess with stolid pride?

"Who's there?" a worried voice had called out from above.

"It's me, Uncle Jeremiah. It's Geo!"

The two of them, Geo and Daniele, stood below in front of the closed street door of the Tabet house. It was ten o'clock by now and standing there in the darkness at the bottom of the alley they couldn't see more than a pace away. Geo's shout—Daniele Josz remembered—had made him start with surprise. It had been a strange kind of yell, strangled by the most violent, inexplicable emotions: surprise and embarrassment and the inability to say anything. In silence,

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bumping into each other and stumbling on the steps, they had groped their way in absolute darkness up two steep flights of stairs.

Finally, at the top of the stairs, half in and half out the door, Attorney Jeremiah had appeared in person, wearing pajamas. In his right hand he was holding a small plate with a candle stuck on it, whose wavering light cast vague, greenish reflections on his naturally pale face framed by a pointed, slightly grizzled beard. As soon as he saw him, he, Daniele Josz, came to a halt. It was the first time since the war had ended; and if he was now about to pay him a visit, he had been led to do it only to please Geo who, on the other hand, after his inspection of the house on Via Campofranco a few hours before, had seemed to have nothing else on his mind but "my Uncle Jeremiah."

Setting the candle on the floor, Attorney Tabet had clasped his nephew to his breast in a long embrace; and that was all that was needed for Daniele, the third, awkward party there, who stood watching the scene from the dark landing below, forgotten down there like some outsider, to feel again the poor relation whom all of them—his own brother Angelo in accord on that point also with the Tabets—had always avoided and scorned because of his "subversive" ideas. He ought to go away, run off without even saying hello. Never put foot in that house again. What a pity it was that he had resisted the temptation! In fact what had held him there was a hope, an absurd hope. After all, he had thought, poor Luce, Geo's mother, was a Tabet, Jeremiah's sister. Perhaps it was only the memory of his mother that now, at first, kept Geo from treating his uncle with the coldness which the old Fascist deserved. . . .

But Daniele had deceived himself, unfortunately; and for the rest of the evening, indeed, until late into the night, since it seemed that Geo could never bring himself to leave, he had been forced to witness, seated in a corner of the parlor, a parade of affection and intimacy that for him was nothing short of disgusting.

It was as if instinctively there had been established an understanding between those two, and it was this: Geo would make no allusion, even indirectly, to his uncle's political errors, and, on his side, his uncle would avoid asking his nephew to talk about what he had seen and suffered in Germany, where, after all, he too had lost—as those people ought to remember who wanted to throw up to him some petty youthful errors, some only-too-human mistake in political choice—a sister, a brother-in-law, and a beloved nephew. What a misfortune, of course, what a tragic destiny! But a sense of proportion and discretion (the past was the past—no point in digging it up again!) ought by now to dominate every other impulse. Better to look ahead, to the future. And, in fact, while we were on the subject of the future, what sort of plans—Jeremiah Tabet had asked, assuming the serious but benevolent tone of the family head who can see far into the future and is capable of handling many problems—what sort of plans did Geo have? He was certainly thinking of reopening his father's store, a noble aspiration which he could approve of, since, moreover, *at least* the warehouse was still there. But if he wanted the enterprise to succeed he needed money, a lot of money; what he should do is make a loan from a bank. Could he perhaps help him there? He hoped so, he really and truly hoped so.

If, for the time being, however, since the house on Via Campofranco was occupied by the "Reds," he might want to come and live temporarily with them, he would always be able to scare up for him, if not a real bed, at least some sort of pallet!

It was at this precise point—Daniele Josz recalled—that he, looking up with renewed interest, had tried once more, though in vain, to understand what it was that was going on.

Sweating profusely, even though in his pajamas, Attorney Tabet sat with his elbows resting on the great black refectory table in whose center the candle was now guttering; and meanwhile, perplexed, he twisted the tip of his little graying goatee, that Fascist goatee which he alone among the old "first-hour" Fascists of Ferrara had had the courage, or the impudence, or perhaps—who knows?—the shrewdness not to shave off. As for Geo, while he shook his head politely, declining the offer, from the other side of the table he fixed his cerulean blue eyes with a stare of fanatical, obstinate intensity right on that now graying beard and the pudgy hand that was tugging at it.

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Autumn ended and then winter came, the long, cold winter of the country hereabouts. Spring returned. And slowly, along with the spring, though still as though Geo's scrutinizing stare alone had conjured it up, the past returned too.

It is strange, isn't it? Yet time began to arrange matters in such a way that it made you think a kind of secret dynamic relationship existed between Geo and Ferrara, between us and Geo. It is difficult, I know, to explain clearly. On one side there was the progressive reabsorption by Geo's body of those unhealthy humors which from his first appearance on Via Mazzini last August had caused so more discussion and perplexity. On the other side there was the simultaneous burgeoning, at first timidly, then more and more openly and decisively, of a moral and physical image of Ferrara and of ourselves which nobody, in his heart, had not wished at one time to forget.

Gradually Geo got thinner, recovering as the months went by—save for his sparse hair, prematurely graying at the temples—a face which his smooth cheeks made even more youthful. But the city also, after the highest piles of rubble had been cleared away and the initial frenzy for superficial changes had worked itself off, reassumed that sleepy, decrepit countenance formed by centuries of clerical decadence—a countenance that by now was a fixed mask which no future time could alter. Everything in Geo spoke of his desire, indeed his demand, to go back to being a boy, that boy he once was, of course, and yet—after having been hurled into the timeless hell of Buchenwald—had never been able to be. And now, just look! we, his fellow citizens, who had been witnesses to his boyhood and adolescence, though we remembered him as a boy only vaguely (but he certainly remembered us, so diverse from what we were today), we went back to being what we had been before the war, what we had always been. Why resist it? If *he* wanted it that way and if, above all, we were like that, why not be satisfied with it?—we began to think with sudden self-indulgence and weariness.

May arrived.

So this is why, one thought, smiling to oneself, just so an absurd regret might not appear too absurd and his, Geo's, illusion might be perfect, it was for this that whole ranks of linked pretty girls on bicycles began to ride again through Via Mazzini, their handle bars overflowing with wild flowers, pedaling slowly to the center of the city from excursions into the surrounding countryside. And it was, moreover, for the same reason that simultaneously, emerging from God knows what hiding place to lean his back against the marble doorjamb which for centuries had supported one of the three ghetto gates, the hermetic little figure of the notorious Count Scocca reappeared down there at the street corner, unalterable as a small stone idol, the symbol for all of us—no one excepted—of the so variously beatific *entre deux guerres*.

And since, in the meantime, the latest generation of Ferrara's pretty girls, exciting open exclamations of praise from the narrow sidewalks and more secret side-long glances of admiration from the dark depths of the shops behind, had on one of those evenings almost finished their slow ascent up Via Mazzini and, in fact, were just about to enter Piazza delle Erbe, laughing as they pedaled along; here, before this spectacle of life eternally renewing itself yet always the same, indifferent to men's passions and problems, there was indeed no rancor, however obstinate, that could possibly hold out. Via Mazzini's small stage presented on its left the serried, luminous ranks of girl cyclists, coming out of the sunlight that poured from the bottom of the street, and on its right, motionless and gray as the wall he was leaning against, Count Lionello Scocca. How could one help but smile at such a sight, bathed in a light that appeared almost the very light of posterity? How could one not be moved at that epiphanic showing forth of a sort of wise allegory which in a trice reconciled everything: the anguishing, atrocious past with a present so much more serene and rich with promises? It is certain that anyone seeing the elderly, penniless aristocrat languidly resume his old observation post—from which it was possible for him, whose sight was perfect and hearing acute, to watch over the entire length of Via Mazzini and at the same time the adjacent Piazza delle Erbe—anyone would have suddenly lacked the heart to reproach him for having been for years the paid informer of the OVRA and having directed from 1939 to 1943 the local chapter of the Italo-German

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Cultural Institute. That Hitler mustache, for example, which he had grown for the occasion, and still preserved, now inspired only thoughts, tinged with sympathy—and, after all, why not?—even gratitude.

It therefore seemed scandalous that Geo Josz, however, had behaved toward Count Scocca—at bottom, a harmless caricature—in a way that not only was lacking in sympathy and gratitude but even in the most elementary sense of humanity and discretion. And our surprise was all the greater since he and his bizarre behavior had for some time now been accepted with benevolent, comprehending smiles. To mention Geo and his famous whims ("He's got something against beards! If it weren't for this . . .") and then to assume the resigned air of someone obliged, constrained to behave in a certain way "just to satisfy him" or, above all, "to do him a favor": this was the general attitude and, at the same time, the profound truth.

At first the incident seemed incredible. Nobody believed it. Absolutely no one could succeed in picturing the scene: Geo entering, without surprise, with his shuffling gait, into Count Scocca's field of vision; Count Scocca who stood there leaning against the wall; Geo who struck the parchment-like cheeks of the resurrected old spy two hard, sharp slaps, "like a true Fascist *squadrista*." Yet surely the event had taken place; a whole crowd of people had witnessed it. But on the other hand: wasn't it rather strange that there immediately circulated several conflicting versions of how it had actually happened? One almost began to doubt not only the correctness of each version, but even the true, objective reality of that double slap, that pow! pow! so loud and ringing, everyone agreed, that it could be heard quite a distance along Via Mazzini—from the church of San Maurelio, a few yards from the point where the Count stood, all the way down to the Jewish synagogue and even farther.

To many people Geo's gesture remained absolutely inexplicable. A few minutes before he had been seen walking in the same direction as the girls on the bicycles, strolling slowly, allowing them gradually to pass him by. And nothing on his face, which he kept fixed on the center of the street and on which might be read mixed feelings of joy and stupefaction, could have led one to imagine what was to occur one minute later. When he came up to Count Scocca and detached his eyes from the trio of cyclists about to cross into Piazza delle Erbe from Via Mazzini, suddenly Geo halted, as if the Count's presence at that time and place seemed to him somewhat inconceivable. In any case his hesitation was very brief. Just long enough for him to wrinkle his brows, tighten his lips, convulsively clench his fists, blurt out something brusque and incoherent. After which, as if he were worked by a spring, he literally swooped down on the poor Count, who, for his part, had until then given no sign of being aware of him.

Was this all? But there must be a cause, there had to be—other people objected, twisting their lips dubiously. Count Scocca had not noticed Geo's arrival; about this fact, no matter how strange it might seem in itself, they all found themselves substantially in agreement. But how could one believe that Geo had become aware of the Count just at the very moment when the three girl cyclists, at whom Geo was avidly staring, were slowly fading into the golden haze of Piazza delle Erbe?

According to this second group, the Count, instead of standing there immobile and silent to gaze at the landscape, only concerned with living up to his own and the city's picture of himself, the Count had been doing something. And this "something," which was perceptible only to those a few yards from the scene—also because, despite everything, the Count's lips had persisted in shifting his toothpick from one corner of his mouth to the other—this "something" was a soft whistle, so weak as to appear more casual than timid: a little idle accidental whistle that would have certainly passed unnoticed if the tune which it hinted at had been anything other than "Lili Marlene." (But wasn't this, after all, the most delightful of details, for which they ought to be even more grateful than ever to the old informer?)

"Tutte le sere all' ombra del fanal—"

Count Scocca was whistling, softly but clearly, and his glance also, despite his seventy-odd years, was lost in the wake of the cycling girls. Perhaps, neglecting to whistle for a moment, he too had joined his voice to the chorus of praise that rose from the

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sidewalks of Via Mazzini, murmuring in dialect with our customary sensual Emilian heartiness: "God bless you!" or "Blessed be you and the mother who made you!" But sheer bad luck had so ordered things that that idle, peaceful, innocent whistle—innocent to anybody else but Geo, naturally—had issued immediately afterwards from his lips. Needless to say, from this point to the very end, the second version of the incident tallies completely with the first.

But there was a third version, and this one, like the first, does not at all mention "Lili Marlén," nor any other sort of whistling more or less innocent or provocatory.

If this last group is to be believed, it was Count Scocca himself who stopped Geo. "Hey!" he had cried, seeing him pass by. Suddenly Geo had halted. And then the Count had immediately begun talking to him, starting right off with his full name ("Well, well, you don't happen to be Geo Josz, the son of my old friend Angelo?"), for Lionello Scocca knew everything about everybody, and the years he had had to spend in hiding (God knows where or how) had in no way clouded his memory or lessened his ability to pick one face out of a thousand—even if it were a face like Geo's that had become a man's, not in Ferrara, but in Buchenwald! And so for some time before Geo leaped at the old man and slapped him with no regard for his age or anything else, the two of them had gone on talking quite affably, the Count questioning Geo about Angelo Josz's demise, for whom—he said—he had *always* had great affection, and also informing himself in detail on the fate of the rest of his family, even Pietruccio, both deploring those "horrible excesses" and congratulating Geo on his return, while Geo replied with a certain embarrassed reluctance, it is true, but in short did reply; in appearance no different from two normal citizens who stop on the sidewalk to chat about this and that while waiting for dusk to come. What, then, had driven Geo suddenly to assault the Count, who hadn't, if one was to believe this version, said anything which could in any way have offended or hurt his interlocutor, and hadn't given the slightest sign, at that very moment, of emitting even the softest of whistles? Geo's whole bizarre character could be found there—according to those who told this story—could be found in this "enigma"; and the gossip and guessing devoted to this matter were not to end soon.

WHATEVER way the incident had really taken place, one fact was certain: from that May evening onwards many things changed. If somebody wanted to comprehend, he comprehended. The others, the majority, were at least given to understand that a turn had been made, something grave and irrevocable had occurred.

The very next day, for example, people could actually see for themselves how thin Geo had become.

Ridiculous as a scarecrow, he reappeared amid wonder, uneasiness, and general alarm, dressed in the same clothes, shako and leather jacket included, that he had worn when he had returned from Germany in August 1945. But now they were so large on him—nor had he, it was obvious, done anything to fix them—that they seemed to be flapping on a clothes hanger. The people watched him come up Corso Giovecca in the morning sun that gleamed gaily, tranquilly on his rags, and they could hardly believe their own eyes. So that was it, all through these months he had done nothing but lose weight, shrivel up! Slowly he had reduced himself to a mere shell! But nobody was able to laugh about it. Seeing him go across Corso Giovecca in front of the City Theater and then turn up Corso Roma (he crossed the street carefully, watching the cars and bicycles with all the caution of an old man), there were very few who didn't inwardly shudder.

And so, from that morning on, without even changing his garb, Geo installed himself, so to say, permanently at the Exchange Café on Corso Roma, where one by one were coming back, if not actually the recent torturers and murderers of the Black Brigade—who, of course, were still kept in hiding by judicial sentences already regarded as "untimely"—at least the old wielders of clubs, the dispensers of castor oil in 1922 and 1924, whom the war had overturned and swept into oblivion. Covered with rags, Geo would stare from his table at their small groups with a certain half-defiant, half-beseeching air. And his attitude contrasted—all to his disadvantage, naturally—with the timidity, the wish not to become too noticeable, that

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every gesture of yesterday's tyrants revealed. Old by now, inoffensive, with the ruinous signs that years of misfortune had multiplied on their faces and bodies, yet reserved, well-bred, well-dressed, they seemed so much more human, so much more touching and deserving of pity than that other one, that Geo. What did he want, that Geo Josz?—many began to ask themselves. After all, the time of perplexity and uncertainty, the time —which now seemed almost heroic!—when before taking even the smallest decision one would, as the saying goes, split each hair and dot each *i*—that period immediately after the war, so full of romanticism, so favorable to moral problems and examinations of conscience, could unfortunately no longer be recalled. So what did Geo Josz want? It was, of course, the same old question, but formulated now without secret fears, with the impatient brutality that life, eager to obtain its due, now demanded of them.

It was for this reason, I say, that there were very few customers of the Exchange Café who were still able to make the effort of getting up from their wicker chairs, negotiating the few yards necessary, and finally sitting down next to Geo.

There were, however, a few—more disinclined than the others to give way to their inner sensation of revulsion. But the feeling of dismay which each time they brought away from these self-imposed *corvées* was always the same. But it wasn't possible, they would exclaim, to converse with a man in a disguise! And, on the other hand, if you let him talk, he would immediately start telling you about Fossoli, about Germany, about Buchenwald, and the death of all of his relatives; and he'd go on like that for hours on end until you were so dazed you didn't know how you could give him the slip. There, at the café, under the yellow awning, which, billowing up laterally in the gusts of sirocco, unavailingly tried to shelter the small tables and chairs from the raging afternoon sun, all you could do was sit.

And meanwhile Geo would be repeating the words that his father had whispered to him before falling exhausted on the path that led from the *lager* to the salt mine where they both worked; and then, not satisfied, he would re-enact his mother's little gesture of farewell at the gloomy railroad station in the middle of a woods, when she had been herded off together with the other women; and then, continuing doggedly, he would tell you about Pietruccio, his little brother, who sat next to him in the dark truck that took them from the railroad through the pine woods to the camp's barracks, and then, all of a sudden, had disappeared, just like that, without a cry or a complaint, and they had never known anything more about him, neither at that time nor ever afterwards. . . . Horrible, of course, terribly painful. But there was something excessive in all this—all the people who returned from these long and depressing sessions unanimously declared, though not, it should also be said, without honest wonder at their own coldness —there was something false, forced. Who knows? Perhaps it was the fault of the propaganda—they would add, to excuse themselves. The truth is that they had already heard, *and at the proper time,* so many stories of this kind that by now to have them served up to you just when the Castle clock was announcing the luncheon or dinner hour, well, quite frankly, one couldn't quite shake off a sensation of boredom and even incredulity.

THROUGHOUT the rest of 1946, all of 1947, and a good part of 1948, the always more ragged and desolate figure of Geo Josz never ceased to be there, right before our eyes. In the streets, the piazzas, the movie houses, the theaters, at the soccer fields, the public ceremonies: one would turn one's head and there he would be, tireless, always with that shadow of saddened amazement in his eyes, as though he asked for nothing more from you but the chance to strike up a conversation. But everybody fled from him like the plague. Nobody understood. Nobody wanted to understand.

It would have been quite understandable —they generally admitted—if, just back from Buchenwald, his spirit still tortured by anguish and anxiety, he had shut himself up in his house, or, on going out, rather than walk along streets like Corso Giovecca, so spacious and open that it sometimes made the most normal of people a bit dizzy, he had instinctively sought out the old city's twisting little streets, the ghetto's dark, narrow alleyways. But that later, after putting away the gabardine suit which Squarcia, the

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town's best tailor, had made to order for him, and then, togged out in his lugubrious deportee's uniform, he had taken pains to appear wherever there were people desirous of enjoying themselves or, quite simply, filled with the healthy wish to get out of the shallows of that filthy postwar period, to forge ahead in some way, to "reconstruct"—what possible excuse could he find for such extravagant and offensive conduct? What did it matter to him that more than a year after the war's end they had decided to open a new outdoor dance hall beyond Porta San Benedetto—yes, that's right—at the curve of the Doro? And this wasn't one of the usual places, not at all—it was a very modern establishment in real American style. Of course only a maniacal hater of life could have gotten it into his head to be inexorably opposed to so gay, so pleasant a club. What was wrong? During the first months almost everybody dropped by there after leaving the movie late, bent on having some sort of midnight snack. But often they would actually wind up by dining there; and then afterwards they would start dancing to the music of a radio-phonograph, mingling with the groups of travelers and truckdrivers, all of them having a gay time until dawn. It was quite natural, after all. Ferrara's society, upset and disordered by the war, was trying to find itself. Life was beginning again. And when one begins again, everybody knows, it's best not to look too closely in anybody's face.

That evening at the dance-hall, for example, where he had begun showing right and left the snapshots of those relatives of his who perished at Buchenwald, he had reached such extreme petulance as to try to buttonhole young boys and girls who at that moment only wished—for the orchestra had just started playing again—to fling themselves, clasped in each others' arms, on to the dance floor. And these weren't fantasies, hundreds of people had seen him do it.

But he *wanted* a scandal, it was obvious: and this was so true that that famous night when he had insisted on forcing his way into the Friends of America Club (this was in February 1947), the waiters had seen appear before them not a decently dressed gentleman but rather a strange type who looked like some beggar, his neck shaved like a jailbird's—who from the vestibule packed with topcoats and furs hung on display, began loudly proclaiming that he was duly enrolled in this club (which, it turned out, was quite true) and therefore entitled to frequent it whenever he pleased. And, furthermore, what right had they, these critics, to blame the club for having taken so drastic a step in Geo's case, when already that preceding autumn they had voted unanimously to return as quickly as possible to the glorious old name of the Union Club, once again restricting their rolls to the aristocracy—the Costabili, the Del Sale, the Maffei, the Scroffa, the Scocca, etc.—and to the most select group of the middle class? If it had been right to welcome almost anyone into the Friends of America, *pro temporum calamitatibus,* without making any difficulties, the Union Club, after all, had certain standards, certain age-old customs, certain natural restrictions—and politics didn't at all come into this—which it was no longer necessary, and why should it be? to fear reviving. After all, why not? Was there something strange about it?

Even old Maria, Maria Ludargnani, who that same winter, between 1946 and '47 had reopened her brothel on Via Arianuova (the only place left, really, where you could gather without politics cropping up to poison relations between people; and so you could spend an evening there just as in the old days, mostly in gossiping or playing a game of rummy with the girls . . .), even Maria had absolutely refused one night to admit Geo when he came knocking at her door, nor could she be induced to leave the peephole, to which she remained glued for quite a while, till she finally saw him walk off into the fog. Well, if it hadn't occurred to anyone on that awkward occasion that Geo was being robbed of his rights, it was all the more reasonable to admit that the Union Club had behaved towards him quite wisely and properly. Democracy, if this word had any meaning, must protect *all* the citizens: those at the bottom, agreed, but also those at the top!

ONLY in 1948, after the elections of April 18, after the Provincial Chapter of the ANIP was forced to move out of his house, only in the summer of that year did Geo Josz decide to leave the city. He suddenly vanished, without leaving the slightest trace,

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like a character in a novel; and right away some said that he had emigrated to Palestine, others that he'd gone to South America, and there were even others who spoke of an unspecified country "behind the Iron Curtain."

The talk about him lasted for a few months more—in the Exchange Café, at the Doro, in Maria Ludargnani's brothel, and many other places. Daniele Josz often had occasion to air his opinions publicly on the subject. Attorney Jeremiah stepped in to take over as the legal guardian of the vanished man's far from negligible financial interests. And meanwhile:

"What a madman," you heard them repeat everywhere. Good-naturedly they would shake their heads, compressing their lips in silence and raising their eyes skywards.

"If only he'd had just a little patience!" they would add, sighing; and this time too they were sincere, this time too they were sincerely troubled.

Then they would go on to say that time, which heals everything in this world, and thanks to which Ferrara was, luckily, rising from its ruins just the same as before, time would at the end have calmed him too, would have helped him to find his place in the social hive—in short, to fit in again since this, when you got down to brass tacks, was his *real* problem. But instead, no. He had preferred to run away. To disappear. To play the tragic one. Just now when, if he'd rented his empty house on Via Campofranco and put the proper effort into resuscitating his father's business, he could have lived comfortably, like a gentleman, and could also have given some thought to setting up a family. To getting married, naturally; for there was not a young girl of his social class in Ferrara who would have regarded the difference in religion as an insurmountable obstacle (in this respect the years had not gone by in vain; everywhere people were much less strict than in the past!). Yes, he couldn't have known, odd as he was, but that's how things would have ended in ninety-nine chances out of a hundred—time would have fixed everything, just as though nothing, absolutely nothing, had ever happened. Of course, he would have had to wait. He would have had to learn how to control his nervousness. And instead: have you ever seen a crazier way of behaving? A more inexplicable character? Ah, but to understand what type of person, what sort of living enigma we had to deal with, the incident with Count Scocca—even without waiting for all the rest—would have, after all, been more than enough . . . .

YES, an enigma.

And yet on closer inspection—when, lacking any more certain evidence, we recall that feeling of absurdity mixed with a sense of the revelation of the truth which any chance encounter can evoke in us, especially as evening is approaching—that very incident with Count Scocca should not have seemed enigmatic or incomprehensible to a heart with even the slightest fellow feeling.

Oh, it's quite true. The light of day is boredom, the deep slumber of the spirit, "tiresome hilarity," as the poet says. But finally let the hour of twilight come, the hour of a calm May twilight evenly suffused with both shadow and light—and lo! people, things that before seemed perfectly normal and innocuous, may suddenly reveal themselves for what they really are; perhaps they may suddenly speak—and it will seem, at that moment, as though one were being struck by a thunderbolt—speak for the first time of themselves and of you.

"What am I doing here with this man? Who is he? And I, I who reply to his questions and thus lend myself to playing his game, who am I?"

It was two slaps which, after a moment or so of silent stupefaction, had answered like lightning Lionello Scocca's persistent, though courteous questions. Yet those questions could also have been answered by a raging, inhuman scream, a scream so loud that the entire city, what was left of it from the intact delusive stage-set of Via Mazzini all the way to the shattered city walls, would have heard it with horror.

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MOSES IN THE THOUGHT OF FREUD

An Ambivalent Interpretation

DAVID BAKAN

THE year 1956 marked the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Sigmund Freud, a man whose long life spanned almost half of the 19th century and over a third of the 20th. His essential modernity leads us to overlook how much of his life was spent in an age which most contemporaries cannot remember, and to ignore the historical factors that may have played a role in the development of psychoanalysis. It is one of the major paradoxes of contemporary psychoanalytic thought that whereas it places so much of its emphasis upon the analysis of "origins," it seems to be without origins itself.

We believe that the primary key to the understanding of Freud is contained in his concern with Moses. In his autobiography Freud tells us, "My early familiarity with the Bible story (at a time almost before I had learnt the art of reading) had, as I recognized much later, an enduring effect upon the direction of my interest." We have two essays on Moses by Freud. One of these is "The Moses of Michelangelo," a discussion of Michelangelo's famous statue, and the other the book, *Moses and Monotheism*. That there may be something especially significant in connection with these two essays is indicated by the fact that in both instances Freud hesitated to reveal his identity as their author. "The Moses of Michelangelo" was published anonymously in the periodical *Imago* in 1914. After writing it between the Christmas of 1913 and New Year's Day of 1914, he finally allowed it to appear, but anonymously, remarking, "Why disgrace Moses by putting my name to it? It is a joke, but perhaps not a bad one."

In his biography of Freud, Ernest Jones points out that the essay was written at the time of Freud's deep concern with C. G. Jung's defection from orthodox psychoanalysis. Jung was extremely important to Freud, for in him he saw a bridge to the Gentile world. In other respects, too, Jones is well aware of the significance of the work. He says: "This essay is of special interest to students of Freud's personality. The fact alone that this statue moved him more deeply than any other of the many works of art with which he was familiar gives his essay on it a peculiar significance." Freud himself writes:

> For no piece of statuary has ever made a stronger impression on me than this. How often have I mounted the steep steps of the unlovely Corso Cavour to the lonely place where the deserted church stands, and have essayed to support the angry scorn of the hero's glance! Sometimes I have crept cautiously out of the half-gloom of the interior, as though I myself belonged to the mob upon whom his eye is turned—the mob which can hold fast no conviction, which has neither faith nor patience, and which rejoices when it has regained its illusory idols.
>
> But why do I call this statue inscrutable? There is not the slightest doubt that it represents Moses, the Lawgiver of the Jews, holding the Tables of the Ten Commandments. That much is certain, but that is all. . . .

Those who knew Freud were evidently aware of his deep feeling. Jones says:

THIS essay represents a condensation from several chapters of a book to be issued this month by D. Van Nostrand Company, *Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition*, by DAVID BAKAN. The author has made a study of Freud's lifelong concern with Jewishness, and at the same time his own study of certain Jewish traditions has suggested to him the probability that Freud's outlook was tinged with inherited attitudes going back to Sabbatianism and other heretical movements in East European Jewry. Mr. Bakan is professor of psychology at the University of Missouri.

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There is every reason to suppose that the grand figure of Moses himself, from Freud's early Biblical studies to the last book he ever wrote, was one of tremendous significance to him. Did he represent the formidable Father-Image or did Freud identify himself with him? Apparently both, at different periods.

And Sachs writes:

It is as if Freud walked intuitively and unknowingly in the footsteps of his ancestors, and followed one of the oldest Jewish traditions: this is the belief that all Jews, born and unborn alike, were present on Mount Sinai and have there taken upon themselves "the yoke of the Law."

The essay itself is hardly the kind that one might ordinarily expect from Freud. It is not a psychoanalytic investigation of the mind of Michelangelo. Instead, the essay gives its attention to the statue itself and to the Moses figure it represents. It attempts only a superficial analysis of Michelangelo to determine what he may have intended by the statue. At the close, Freud indicates that he may, after all, have just been projecting. He writes:

But what if we both [Freud and a critic, Lloyd] strayed on to a wrong path? What if we have taken too serious and profound a view of details which were nothing to the artist, details which he had introduced quite arbitrarily, or for some purely formal reasons with no hidden intention behind? What if we have shared the fate of so many interpreters who have sought to see quite clearly things which the artist did not intend either consciously or unconsciously? I cannot tell.

This is hardly the Freud who argued so cogently that no human production is whimsical or arbitrary. He does not plumb the nature of Michelangelo's motivation. Rather he uses the statue as an occasion for the clarification of his own problem with respect to Moses. He concludes that the statue does not represent Moses about to rise in anger. Instead, he argues, what is represented is restrained anger, anger which will never materialize in a hostile action:

The figure of Moses, therefore, cannot be supposed to be springing to his feet; he must be allowed to remain as he is, in sublime repose like the other figures and like the proposed statue of the Pope (which was not, however, executed by Michelangelo himself). But then the statue we see before us cannot be that of a man filled with wrath, of Moses when he came down from Mount Sinai and found his people faithless and threw down the Holy Tables so that they were broken. And, indeed, I can recollect my own disillusionment when, during my first visits to the church, I used to sit down in front of the statue in the expectation that I should now see how it would start up on its raised foot, hurl the Tables of the Law to the ground and let fly its wrath. Nothing of the kind happened. Instead, the stone image became more and more transfixed, an almost oppressively solemn calm emanated from it, and I was obliged to realize that something was represented here that could stay without change; that this Moses would remain in his wrath forever.

The picture we get is that of Freud sitting for weeks at the tomb of Pope Julius II in Rome gazing at the statue of Moses. He sits in fear of the wrath of Moses, feeling this statue to be Moses himself, about to strike at the Jews for their defection. Slowly the image is converted into one of restrained anger. In his initial reaction to the statue he identifies with the "mob which can hold fast no conviction," with those who danced about the Golden Calf. But his fear exerts itself as the creation of a counter-image.

What we see before us is not the inception of a violent action but the remains of a movement that has already taken place. In his first transport of fury, Moses desired to act, to spring up and take vengeance and forget the Tables; but he has overcome the temptation, and he will now remain seated and still in his frozen wrath and in his pain mingled with contempt.

Jones provides an interpretation of this essay in terms of Freud's positive identification with Moses. Jung had defected, and Freud had to find a way to control the deep anger that this defection produced in him. We would certainly agree with Jones regarding this identification, but we believe that its significance is hardly probed. If Freud conceives of himself as the new Lawgiver, then he must at one and the same time be like unto Moses, the previous Lawgiver, whose place he must preempt, and must be destructive of Moses. The new

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Lawgiver must revoke the older Law. The identification with Moses turns into its opposite, the destruction of Moses. Therefore Freud is also part of the mob, upon whom Moses' eye is turned—"the mob which can hold fast no conviction, which has neither faith nor patience, and which rejoices when it has regained its illusory idols."

Freud suggests in the essay that his view of a tempered, restrained Moses is perhaps a reproach against the strongmindedness of Pope Julius II, who

> . . . attempted to realize great and mighty ends, especially designs on a large scale. He was a man of action and he had a definite purpose, which was to unite Italy under the Papal supremacy. He desired to bring about single-handed what was not to happen for several centuries, and then only through the conjunction of many alien forces; and he worked alone, with impatience, in the short span of sovereignty allowed him, and used violent means.

In his later work, *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), Freud characterizes Moses in much the same way. The reproach against the Pope, which he attributes to Michelangelo, may be interpreted as the reproach of Freud against Moses, the Lawgiver of the Jews. It was he who imposed the "yoke of the Law" upon the Jews. Moses is the image which embodies the whole brunt of Jewish Orthodoxy. The Talmud and the other Rabbinical writings constitute an elaboration of dicta of the Mosaic code, which the Orthodox Jew takes upon himself to guide his life at every moment and in connection with every action. In a word, Moses is representative of the superego, the force generated within the individual to keep him from "instinctual gratification." The force which maintains renunciation of instinctual gratification is the fear of punishment. *In the allegory of the discussion of a statue Freud is saying that the feared punishment will never eventuate.* The superego is restrained. The superego will withhold its wrath, and will not strike. In this new view of Moses, Freud has turned him into a stone image, one which will not kill those who dance around the Golden Calf, those who do not accept but violate the commandments upheld by the Rabbinic tradition. Freud's essay on Moses is a symbolic assertion of freedom against the severe restrictions of thought and action which had been the life strategy of the East European Jews.

Yet Freud was never quite able to extricate himself from the Mosaic dicta. This is exemplified by the thesis which he advanced in *Totem and Taboo,* and reaffirmed in *Moses and Monotheism,* that the acquired sense of guilt is transmitted hereditarily. This "peculiarity" of Freud, as it has been regarded by many, is made clear by his involvement with the Mosaic dicta. His supposition "that the sense of guilt for an action has persisted for many thousands of years and has remained operative in generations which can have no knowledge of that action" is a version of the Mosaic threat that God visits "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."

II

We turn now to what we consider Freud's most revelatory work with respect to our hypothesis, his book *Moses and Monotheism.* It was the last completed work Freud wrote and, in our opinion, expresses some of the deepest impulses which were operative throughout his life. The work is the only one written by Freud which directs itself avowedly to the problem of Judaism and the meaning of being Jewish. Some followers of Freud have tended to dismiss it; and by some it is regarded as the product of senility, with the suggestion, perhaps, that respect to Freud's genius is best paid by ignoring it. Morris Raphael Cohen wrote of it:

> If anyone else had written this book, we should have been justified in dismissing it as the work of an opinionated crank who is more interested in his tortuous speculation than in getting at the verifiable facts. . . . He unhesitatingly dismisses the identification of the Habiru of the Amarna tablets with the Hebrew invaders of Palestine, and also waves aside the sole known Egyptian reference to Israel,

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because they do not fit into his chronologic scheme. He is certain that the Priestly Code did not adopt any new tendencies, that religion is a neurosis and only thus can it be understood, that all children and primitive people are neurotic, and (contrary to all experience) that tradition is less subject to distortion in time than a written text. While, therefore, no careful student of the subject is likely to be misled by a work which has so little foundation, the general public is likely to get the impression that a new and substantial contribution to the understanding of Jewish history has been made on the basis of psychoanalysis.

The evidence which Freud cited for his assertions is dubious and does not support his conclusions. His argument that Moses was an Egyptian resides in part on dubious etymological evidence concerning Moses' name, which Freud himself does not consider decisive, and on comparison between the Moses legend and other legends. Besides the general weakness of the argument the book manifests other striking characteristics. There is evident hesitation and ambivalence with respect to its publication. Toward the end of the first section he writes,

> If there was no more certainty than this to be attained, why have I brought this inquiry to the notice of a wider public? I regret that even my justification has to restrict itself to hints.

At the very end of the first section he again expresses the same sentiment:

> Even if one were to accept it as historical that Moses was Egyptian, we should want at least one other fixed point so as to protect the many emerging possibilities from the reproach of their being products of imagination and too far removed from reality. An objective proof of the period into which the life of Moses, and with it the exodus from Egypt, fall would perhaps have sufficed. But this has not been forthcoming, and therefore it will be better to suppress any inferences that might follow our view that Moses was an Egyptian.

He has two prefaces to the third part of the essay. The first one indicates that because he is living in a "Catholic country under the protection of that Church" he will withhold it from publication. Yet ambivalence is clearly present, because this preface, which ends with an assertion that he will not publish the essay, begins with the words:

> With the audacity of one who has little or nothing to lose I propose to break a well-founded resolution for the second time and to follow up my two essays on Moses . . . [contained as the first two parts of the book] with the final part, till now withheld.

He makes the point that he is an old man and that old men lose their creative faculties. He even enters into a minor quarrel with George Bernard Shaw on the question of the value of contributions by old men. The second preface, written in London after his removal there from Vienna in 1938, asserts that he had had "inner misgivings as well as external hindrances" in connection with the essay. Because of changed political conditions, he says, "I dare now to make public the last part of my essay." Toward the end of this second preface he writes, "To my critical faculties this treatise, proceeding from a study of the man Moses, seems like a dancer balancing on one toe." He protests his right to be arbitrary with the work of others in a discussion of the work of Robertson Smith. "Above all, however," he says, "I am not an ethnologist, but a psychoanalyst. It was my good right to select from ethnological data what would serve me for my analytic work."

To what conclusions do these considerations lead us? *Moses and Monotheism* must be considered in a typically Freudian manner, *as having a manifest and latent content;* and Freud himself has told us something of the ways by which to determine the latent from the manifest content. Since our culture associates consciousness with responsibility, and Freud was evidently aware of the hostility the book might generate, we may suspect that part of his motivation was to generate the impression of unconscious intent. He was afraid that the book would anger the Jews, and he opens with a sentence which strongly suggests that the book was in some sense hostile to the

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Jews—in our interpretation, the Orthodox Jews. The first sentence reads, "To deny a people the man whom it praises as the greatest of its sons is not a deed to be undertaken lightheartedly—especially by one belonging to that people."

What significance shall we ascribe to Freud's thesis that Moses was an Egyptian? From the point of view of all evident tradition, Moses was both an Egyptian and a Jew. The well-known Biblical story has it that he was born a Jew, but was brought up in the royal household of Egypt. Josephus, the historian, tells us that Moses was a general for Egypt who fought against the Ethiopians. But the fact remains that, in spite of all Egyptian associations, Moses is still taken as a Jew. Freud's point is that Moses was *genetically* an Egyptian. It is interesting to note a psychoanalyst, M. Wulff, pointing out that "the whole question as to the national origin of Moses does not appear to be of decisive importance for Freud's main problem, the origin and development of monotheism." It is actually quite conceivable that the whole book, insofar as its psychological content is concerned, could have been written without imputing genetic Gentilism to Moses. On the presumption of a Gentile Moses, Freud argues an association of Moses with the Egyptian Aton religion, a point that he could easily have made on the basis of the Biblical story that Moses was raised in the royal household.

As the internal evidence indicates, he regards the idea of Moses-as-a-Gentile as critically important. Yet the logic of his manifest presentation does not require it. He recognizes that his arguments for the assertion are tenuous and that his "justification has to restrict itself to hints." In the same paragraph in which Freud says "it is not attractive to be classed with the scholastics and Talmudists," he adds what we consider to be a key phrase, "Moses was an Egyptian whom a people needed to make into a Jew." Yet if, following Freud, the context tends to bear out the interpretation by opposites, then Freud's assertion that "Moses . . . was an Egyptian whom a people needed to make into a Jew" can more meaningfully be formulated as *Moses was a Jew whom Freud needed to make into a Gentile.*

In his attempt to demonstrate that Moses was an Egyptian, Freud draws upon the idea of the family romance, which he had developed in a paper bearing the title *Family Romances.* He cites Rank's book, *Der Mythus von der Geburt des Helden,* to confirm his point. Freud writes,

> [Rank's book] . . . deals with the fact that almost all important civilized peoples have early woven myths around and glorified in poetry their heroes, mythical kings and princes, founders of religions, of dynasties, empires and cities —in short, their national heroes. Especially the history of their birth and of their early years is furnished with phantastic traits. . . ."

He argues that in the "average myth," the hero is born into a noble and royal family, but grows up in a humble and degraded family. Then he points out that the myth of Moses is quite different. Moses is born of the Jewish Levites but is raised in the royal house. On the basis of this divergence, Freud infers that Moses was an Egyptian by birth.

THAT Freud, who was well aware of the tendentious character of myth, should attempt to go back to the actual *facts* associated with Moses through myth is most strange. If he had limited himself to inferences concerning an original myth of which the Biblical myth is a distortion, he would be on sounder ground. But inferences as to presumptive facts on the basis of the logic of myth cannot be made. Freud says clearly in *Moses and Monotheism* that the idea of a person born into nobility is mythical and grounded in psychological needs.

> The inner source of the myth is the so-called "family romance" of the child, in which the son reacts to the change in his inner relationship to his parents, especially that to his father. The child's first years are governed by grandiose over-estimation of his father; kings and queens in dreams and fairy tales always represent, accordingly, the parents. Later on, under the influence of rivalry and real disappointments, the release from the parents and a critical attitude toward the father set in.

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And then Freud tells us:

> The Moses myth as we know it today lags sadly behind its secret motives. If Moses is not of royal lineage our legend cannot make him into a hero; if he remains a Jew it has done nothing to raise his status.

By conceiving of Moses as an Egyptian nobleman Freud is, in effect, completing the Moses myth in a way which had never been done in the history of the Jews. The Jews have "lagged behind" because they have not added the critical element to the myth that Moses was born of nobility, and this Freud is doing by writing this book. Cogent evidence that such is indeed the case is provided by Freud's use of the term "family romance." For in his essay on the family romance Freud points out that the child develops the idea that he is "a step-child or an adopted child." But the theme of the Jews having been *adopted* by Moses is exactly what Freud's book is about!

We now see the significance of the genetic emphasis for Freud. It is, in part, self-aggrandizing. By creating a Gentile Moses of high position and royal lineage, he overcomes his sense of the Jew as a person of low social status. Freud, as we know from various biographical items, felt very sensitive about the low social position to which his Jewishness held him. Freud's myth that the Jews were *adopted* by a Gentile of high nobility overcomes the sense of degradation associated with his feelings of being a Jew. In this he repeats in thought what the Sabbatians did in action: Sabbatai Zevi was taken into the Sultan's court; Jacob Frank was sponsored by King Augustus III when he was baptized; and the Frankists as a group were sponsored by the Polish nobility in their baptism.

By developing the myth of Moses as a member of the Egyptian royal household, Freud is reforming it to fit the pattern of the usual myth. It was necessary for Freud to refashion the myth, so that its merely mythical character would be revealed. This brings us to our next point, the Moses-as-a-Gentile image as a device for coping with anti-Semitism.

III

We know that throughout his life Freud suffered from a deep sense of being discriminated against as a Jew. The book itself was written in the throes of the greatest disaster the Jews had ever experienced. Part of it was written in Vienna when the shadow of Hitler loomed over all of Austria, and part of it in London, where Freud had been displaced by Hitler. There can be little doubt that this book, which is Freud's most intense expression of his concern with the problem of Judaism, must in some sense have been a response to the outward events of his life. To say that Freud wrote it as a reaction to his experience of the force of anti-Semitism must hit at the truth in some way.

The work contains, among other contributions, a most interesting set of ideas concerning anti-Semitism. Freud writes:

> The deeper motives of anti-Semitism have their roots in times long past; they come from the unconscious, and I am quite prepared to hear that what I am going to say will at first appear incredible. I venture to assert that the jealousy which the Jews evoked in other peoples by maintaining that they were the first-born, favorite child of God the Father, has not yet been overcome by those others, just as if the latter had given credence to the assumption.

Now how does the idea of a Gentile Moses work to soften the force of anti-Semitism? Freud says explicitly that it is to Moses that the Jewish people owes "much of the hostility which it has met and is meeting still." As we have just seen, Freud believed that the basis of anti-Semitism is to be found in the Jewish idea of the "chosen people." To this Freud counterposes the thesis that the Jews are not God's "chosen people," but rather the "chosen people" of Moses. He says,

> Sometimes, it is true, we hear of a people adopting another god, but never of a god choosing a new people. Perhaps we approach an understanding of this unique happening when we reflect on the connection between Moses and the Jewish people. Moses had stooped to the Jews, had made them his people; they were his "chosen people."

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The characteristics that make the Jew obnoxious to the Gentile are, according to Freud, not at all uniquely Jewish, but rather of Gentile origins. He writes

> that . . . the man Moses created their character by giving to them a religion which heightened their self-confidence to such a degree that they believed themselves to be superior to all other peoples. They survived by keeping aloof from the others.

The circumcision, which in the Jewish tradition is taken as the sign of the Covenant, is, according to Freud, merely an Egyptian custom imposed on the Jews, and the Jews have been the objects of anti-Semitic attack because of it.

> The possibility that the Jews in Egypt adopted the usage of circumcision in any other way than in connection with the religion Moses gave them, may be rejected as quite untenable.

But,

> among the customs through which the Jews marked off their aloof position, that of circumcision made a disagreeable, uncanny impression on others.*

Periodically, when faced with persecution, the Jews have been brought into doubt about the genuineness of the Covenant. In 17th- and 18th-century Sabbatianism particularly there was a tendency to abandon their faith in God, to regard the religion received from Moses as appropriate for an earlier day, but contemporarily inappropriate. We recall in this connection Jacob Frank's assertion that the Law, the Torah, was dead. Freud renews the breach of faith in the Mosaic God, by the identification of this God with the all-human image of Moses, who had thus seduced the Jews into several thousands of years of deception. This Moses, *who was not even a Jew himself,* turned their heads with a glamorous idea of having a special relationship to God; and they, rather than face up to the humiliation of the seduction, retain only this grand image of themselves painted by their seducer.

*Freud's emphasis on the castration fear may be given a somewhat Cabbalistic interpretation, as a fear that the sign of the Covenant, worn on the penis in the form of the mark of circumcision, will be taken away; i.e., fear that God will break the Covenant, that love will be withdrawn and punishment will ensue.

Freud clung to the Lamarckian idea of genetic transmission of cultural characteristics throughout his life. He makes the point in *Totem and Taboo,* and reaffirms it in *Moses and Monotheism.* When challenged by Joseph Wortis on the concept of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, to the effect that it was inconsistent with what most biologists believed, he said, "But we can't bother with the biologists. We have our own science." And then he added, "We must go our own way."

The idea of the cultural continuity of a people through genetic transmission sharpens the significance of Freud's assertion that Moses was genetically a Gentile. If the set of beliefs associated with Moses are the reasons for anti-Semitism, and if Moses was not a Jew, then anti-Semitism is properly directed against Moses, not the Jews.

It is characteristically maintained that the Jewish contribution to Western civilization is its strong ethical orientation, and this is reaffirmed by Freud. The effect of Moses was to make the Jews accept "instinctual renunciation." The Jews took upon themselves the "yoke of the Law," and through them it was transmitted to Christianity. Freud indicates that one of the reasons for anti-Semitism is exactly this, that the Jew is symbolic of the superego. Anti-Semitism, says Freud, is most acute in those people who have newly taken upon themselves the burden of Mosaic morality.

> We must not forget that all the peoples who now excel in the practice of anti-Semitism became Christians only in relatively recent times, sometimes forced to it by bloody compulsion. One might say they all are "badly christened"; under the thin veneer of Christianity they have remained what their ancestors were, barbarically polytheistic. They have not yet overcome their grudge against the new religion which was forced on them, and they have projected it on to the source from which Christianity came to them. The fact that the Gospels tell a story which is enacted among Jews, and in truth treats only of Jews, has

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facilitated such a projection. The hatred for Judaism is at bottom hatred for Christianity, and it is not surprising that in the German National Socialist revolution this close connection of the two monotheistic religions finds such clear expression in the hostile treatment of both.

Freud was aware of the dynamics of anti-Semitism, as a reaction of the "badly christened" to the repressive forces of the Mosaic code. To ward off anti-Semitism, he would wish *to separate the Mosaic characteristics from the image of the Jew*. Moses, he therefore says, was not a Jew, and hence the Jews should not be blamed for the Mosaic "yoke." In effect, he casts Moses from the Jewish fold, and says to the world, "Why do you blame me for the impositions of the superego when the one who was responsible for it was not even a Jew?"

Freud's repeated affirmation of his Jewish identity becomes illuminated through *Moses and Monotheism*. If it is the Jew who carries the burden of the historical superego, then it is only a Jew who can really remove the sense of sin. We recall in this connection Freud's assertion that psychoanalysis could only have been created by a Jew; in a letter to his Swiss friend Oskar Pfister he wrote, ". . . by the way, how comes it that none of the godly ever devised psychoanalysis and that one had to wait for a godless Jew?" If the Jews represent the authority of the Law, only a Jew can declare that the Law is dead. Psychoanalysis, in this larger cultural sense, may be viewed as a fundamental effort to modify the classical image of the Jew. The Jew no longer stands in the shadow of Moses, insisting upon rigid adherence to the letter of the Law, as expressed, for example, by Shakespeare in Shylock, but rather as a father figure who is patient and forgiving, tolerant and understanding, of violations of the Mosaic code. Such a role can be accomplished by Freud only through his full identification of himself as a Jew who is, moreover, dissociated from the figure of Moses. In his presumptive position of authority he can rescind the Law, declare the Law invalid. Thus Freud plays the role of a new Moses who comes down with a new Law dedicated to personal psychological liberty.

IV

As we have suggested, Freud in *Moses and Monotheism* is fashioning a myth which would be more appropriate for the Jews of the modern world. We turn now to another major element in this myth, Freud's supposition that the Jews killed Moses.

If the theme of Moses-as-Gentile invites a deeper interpretation, so must the theme of the murder of Moses. Freud's arguments on this point are less tortuous than those he uses in connection with the Moses-as-Gentile idea. The murdered father theme was already present in his *Totem and Taboo* in the notion of the totem feast; and he uncritically accepts the idea of a murdered Moses from Sellin's Biblical analysis. Even with respect to Sellin's work, however, Freud admits that he has chosen what suits him: "Sellin thinks that Shittim in the land east of the Jordan is indicated as the scene of the violent deed. We shall see, however, that the choice of this locality does not accord with our argument."

Later, when he discusses the refutation of Robertson Smith's theories by other ethnologists he blithely announces his right to be arbitrary.

In the section immediately following his introduction of the Moses-murder idea, Freud includes a passage which appears to deal with the way in which historical distortion takes place. This passage invites a reflexive interpretation, that is, an interpretation of the text by its own message. Freud is discussing the writing of Biblical text:

> The text, however, as we find it today tells us enough about its own history. Two distinct forces, diametrically opposed to each other, have left their traces on it. On the one hand, certain transformations got to work on it, falsifying the text in accord with secret tendencies, maiming and extending it until it was turned into its opposite. On the other hand, an indulgent piety reigned over it, anxious to keep everything as it stood, indifferent to whether the details fitted together or nullified one another. Thus almost

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everywhere there can be found striking omissions, disturbing repetitions, palpable contradictions, signs of things the communication of which was never intended. *The distortion of a text is not unlike a murder.* [My italics.] The difficulty lies not in the execution of the deed, but in doing away with the traces. One could wish to give the word "distortion" the double meaning to which it has a right, although it is no longer used in this sense. It should mean not only "to change the appearance of," but also "to wrench apart," "to put in another place." That is why in so many textual distortions we may count on finding the suppressed and abnegated material hidden away somewhere, though in an altered shape and torn out of its original connection. Only it is not always easy to recognize it.

The passage applies, presumably, to the processes involved in bringing the Bible to its present form. But let us suppose that it is a kind of verbal ambiguity, such as Freud compared to dreams and discussed in *The Interpretation of Dreams,* in which the "indefatigable" dream-work or "joke work" has succeeded in making the same assertion not only about the Bible, but about Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* itself. Thus, for example, the italicized sentence in particular could well have been written as a pointed description of *Moses and Monotheism.* Freud's book is itself *about* a murder, the murder of Moses.

WHAT is really of moment, however, is that the murder of Moses is Freud's own doing! *Moses and Monotheism* is indeed one of the grossest distortions of the Biblical text committed in modern times by a reputable scholar. The fantasy of the murder of Moses is a current one, one that Freud engages in at the very moment of writing. The actual evidence is very tenuous, but the murder of Moses is something which Freud must assert as fact. What he is doing is projecting a current fantasy onto a past situation, which is what is done in all myth-making. *It is Freud who wishes that Moses were murdered;* and by this, of course, we must mean he wishes that the current repressive and oppressive forces associated with the Mosaic image would be killed. What Jacob Frank did literally when he cut up the Torah to make shoes of the parchment for his friends, Freud does in his own way through myth. And Jacob Frank's assertion that the Torah was dead, Freud repeats with psychoanalytic sophistication.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams* Freud writes,

> The sanctity which we attribute to the rules laid down in the Decalogue has, I think, blunted our powers of perceiving the real facts. We seem scarcely to venture to observe that the majority of mankind disobey the Fifth Commandment.

In *Moses and Monotheism,* he refers to the murder of Moses as "the murder of the Father." To say, however, that the theme of the Moses murder is but an expression of Freud's own Oedipus complex is to treat Freud much too lightly. In his writing, Freud frequently did refer to the significance of his own Oedipus complex. Furthermore, he made the infantile relationship of the child to his parents the critical feature in the analysis of human personality. Besides this we find frequent identifications in Freud's writings of father and God, father and Moses, or father and superego. He refers to Oedipus as *that mythical law breaker.* Evidently Freud conceives of the Oedipal crime as prototypical of all law-breaking.*

The technical problem presented to us by Freud's writings is whether to consider as primary the infantile experiences with his actual father or the larger social forces captured in the idiom of the psychology of the child. We hesitate to answer this question too quickly because of the disparity between the information which we have concerning Freud's actual father and the image of the father in Freud's paradigm. Freud's actual

*Freud's concept has an interesting parallel in the Talmud. In discussing the sins that were committed by the idolatrous Amon, "R. Johanan and R. Eleazor [dispute therein]: One maintained, He burnt the Torah: the other, he dishonored his mother. His mother remonstrated with him: 'Hast thou then any pleasure in the place whence thou didst issue?' He replied: 'Do I do this for any other purpose than to provoke my Creator!'"—*The Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin II (Seder Nezikin)*, Soncino, 1935.

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father does not seem to have been the strong-minded, stern, quick-to-wrath, deeply emotional, castration-threatening personality of Freud's paradigmatic father. Indeed, in *The Interpretation of Dreams,* Freud writes of his disappointment in his father for having yielded without a struggle after being accosted by a Gentile. Jones tells us that Jakob Freud was of gentle disposition and that Freud described his father in "rather Micawber-like terms as being 'always hopefully expecting something to turn up.'" We hear about his father's illness and get an impression of a gentle and ineffectual personality, one at considerable variance with the father image of Freud's discussions. *This suggests it is the social-religious father who is projected upon the real father, rather than the reverse.*

We believe that the murder of Moses is Freud's allegorical attempt to destroy the restrictive hold of rabbinism on the Jews and on himself, as well as the parallels to such rabbinism in Western civilization at large. In the details of the processes by which children are acculturated, and particularly in the prescriptions and prohibitions with respect to sexuality, he recognized the significance of the Mosaic code. In *Moses and Monotheism* he implicitly defends his identification of the development of the neurosis of the individual with the development of society.

THE figure of Moses is the link between the prevailing conditions of contemporary society and history; for the moral ethos of the whole Judeo-Christian tradition, in its restrictive aspects at least, may be traced to the Moses image. Moses plays a double role as a historical figure and contemporary image of the variety of forces which Freud recognized as the root of neurotic conflict. In Freud's avowal and acceptance of the Oedipus complex he attempted to rewrite the Law of Moses in a way which would be more compatible with the prevailing spirit of liberty. He was trying to remake and rework our conceptions of morality in a way which would make it possible for the individual to live a richer and less hampered existence, freed from the taboos which Judaism had imposed upon itself for its survival, and which had been accepted by the Christian world as a way of life. Hence it is necessary for Freud to kill Moses. Not that the real Moses has not been dead for several thousands of years, and not that the real Moses would not have been dead whether killed or not. But the Moses of Freud's murder is the Moses each person carries about with him. And in this too Freud identifies himself with all Jewry. For in his fantasy he is not alone in the murder. The myth he fashions is not of one person murdering Moses. It is a murder committed collectively by all the Jews.

There is one final point to be made in connection with the theme of the murder of Moses, bringing into consideration again the Moses-as-Gentile theme. The commission of heresy, which Freud allegorically portrays as a murder, must necessarily invoke the guilt associated with the Oedipal crime. Indeed, Freud saw the murder of Moses by the Jews as a necessary explanation of their genetic burden of guilt, which he as a Jew consciously felt. If it is necessary to kill Moses, however, then the idea that Moses was an Egyptian serves to take some of the edge off the guilt. In a sense, the Moses-as-an-Egyptian myth is a counter-myth to that of the murdered Moses. By making Moses an Egyptian, Freud absolves himself and the Jews of the guilt associated with the murder-thought. Killing Moses-as-an-Egyptian is simply killing a member of the group which first persecuted the Jews.* Killing an Egyptian Moses is not the complete patricide it seems to be. Freud is killing the classical enemy of the Jew, and moreover, a stepfather at best. In the myth Freud fashions he kills someone in the belief that he is his father, which in "reality" he is not, but rather, in this metaphorical sense, the enemy of his father, an Egyptian. Thus by writing this book, Freud becomes a Jewish hero in the history of the Jews. He performs the traditional Messianic function of relieving guilt, the very same function he ascribes to Jesus.

*This is, paradoxically, also in imitation of the Moses-as-a-Jew who had killed an Egyptian for smiting a Hebrew (Exodus 2:12).

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SPUTNIK AND SEGREGATION

Should the Gifted Be Educated Separately?

BRUNO BETTELHEIM

FIRST there was Little Rock; then came Sputnik. First there was excitement about equal schooling for all children irrespective of race, and then about the need for special schooling for the gifted child. One might think that the two are totally unrelated, that there exists no connection between desegregation and the education of the gifted. Persistent headlines on both issues seem just pure chance, or one of the vagaries of history.

Yet with Sputnik in the sky, the Russian advances in science and technology—long known to all experts—suddenly aroused vast anxiety among wide circles of the population. There was a strong emotional reaction to the realization that we are not always the biggest and the best, that we were not, in fact, the first to send a dog into orbit. And suddenly the education of the gifted became everybody's concern. We must have more and better scientists, and our educational system must immediately be reformed so as to supply this need—if not by today, then certainly by tomorrow.

It hardly seems necessary to mention the powerful emotions which the issue of desegregation in the schools arouses both in the North and the South; the liberal North excitedly telling the South what ought to be done, and when and how, and the South just as vehemently insisting that the North mind its own business, and consider what is going on in its big cities and genteel suburbs. Both sections of the country point at each other and cry, "Look who's calling the kettle black!" It is difficult to say with much conviction who in this controversy is kettle and who is pot. The South—ever so reluctantly and not just occasionally in bad faith—seems to be moving from "separate but equal" toward integration; while the white, liberal, middle-class North seems to be aiming (not in principle, not according to doctrine, but in actual practice) at school arrangements which can best be described as separate and unequal. It is no accident that public interest was shown in both issues—desegregation and education of the gifted—at the same time.

Behind the shouting and the newspaper demands that we stop the inequities of Southern school segregation, there is often hidden the fact of Northern segregation. Here, the separation of the "nice" white children from the poor white and Negro children is accomplished both by the enlargement of private and parochial school systems, and by the move to the suburbs—a move for which the family's main reasons are usually the better suburban schools and the fact that the children will associate with more desirable playmates than would be the case in the city. In the white suburbs the children are supposed to enjoy better cultural opportunities. These opportunities, strangely enough, are no longer equated with being close to the cultural facilities that an urban center offers, but rather with lawns and trees, though historically cultural advances have been tied to urban and not to rural life. That the chief reason for moving to the suburbs is the wish to keep the middle-class child from having to go to school with

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THE fight over segregation has coincided with a drive to reform American education so as to give better opportunities to gifted children of all races. In the present article an experienced psychologist and educator examines this twofold problem and suggests that there may be a tendency to replace the color line by a new kind of social discrimination. BRUNO BETTELHEIM heads the University of Chicago's Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School. He reviewed Kenneth B. Clark's *Prejudice and Your Child* in the April 1956 COMMENTARY.

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children from "undesirable" homes, is further suggested by the fact that suburban real estate developers usually make the good school system their main selling point. And sure enough, once the children are no longer of school age, many of the suburban families move back into the cities, precisely because commuting is a bother and the cultural advantages of the city are more available.

But moving to the suburbs is not the only way in which middle-class parents avoid having their children go to integrated schools. They also send their children to private schools, which has led to increased enrollment in the existing ones and the creation of new private schools. Yet the very expensive private schools can hardly begin to meet the demand and so we see an even more remarkable growth of segregated religious school systems, Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish, even as the segregated public schools are abolished by law.

Now what has all this to do with Sputnik? The connection between integration in the schools and education for the gifted is indeed intricate. School integration—not as a social obligation or a question of moral justice, but as adjudged by the Supreme Court—is required because in states where the schools are segregated the educational facilities for Negro children are inadequate. The public demand for better provision for the gifted child is based on exactly the same premise; i.e., that educational facilities are inadequate, in this case for the gifted child. Thus both have for their common denominator the lack of adequate educational facilities.

If we try viewing the great excitement over Little Rock and Sputnik as a case of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc,* the sequence of events may be as follows: we wish to see our schools integrated—so much so that we try to enforce this aim by law. Our reason is that we desire to promote literacy and academic achievement, and secure equal educational opportunities for all children. As a result, large numbers of children will enter our schools who are less well educated than the rest of the population, because they have never before enjoyed equal educational opportunities and because the educational background of their parents is inferior. The process will improve the educational opportunities of the new arrivals, but at the same time it will lower the over-all average for academic achievement. This result, it is hoped, will not be permanent, but only a temporary consequence of integration. But at the moment we face the paradox that what was meant to raise academic achievement tends temporarily (and perhaps permanently) to lower the educational level of one part of the population while, hopefully, raising the average of the population as a whole. All this is going on while the "not-so-cold" war leads to demands for an acceleration of scientific achievements. The solution to the problem of risking a drop in the top levels of intellectual achievement (through equality in education designed to bring up all levels of achievement) while trying to step up intellectual efforts, seems to be to create special educational opportunities for the gifted. Thus the argument runs both ways: higher average achievement by means of equal educational opportunities for everybody (Little Rock); and organization of special educational facilities for gifted children (Sputnik). By now the discussion begins to echo the Orwellian principle that all animals are equal, but some more equal than others. All too often the same people who insist that all men are equal (and hence fight against segregation *according to race*) claim just as heatedly that some are more equal—and hence demand a different type of schooling for the gifted.

In the vanguard of the fight for desegregation is a section of the liberal intelligentsia. The argument thus acquires the ominous character of a fight for equal opportunities for the rest of the population, plus special opportunities for our own group, the intelligentsia. Or, closer to fact, the special educational privileges of white over Negro should be eliminated, but special educational opportunities should be created for the intellectual elite.

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But perhaps all this is exaggeration. It may be that the plans for the education of the gifted do not imply the creation of a new, separate, and unequal education system. Let us see what in fact is being proposed for the education of the gifted. Since last fall, to take only one example, the ideas of Professor Paul Woodring have obtained wide public attention. First *Life* magazine (September 2, 1957) devoted a big spread to his plan for revising the school system; then his book, *A Fourth of a Nation,* was widely discussed; and more recently an editorial in *Science* (February 21, 1958), the official organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the largest scientists' group in this country, notes the "widespread attention" accorded to his plan for a new educational system. In the *Life* article, entitled "Reform Plan for Schools," he suggested a school population that would eventually separate into three large groups: bright, average, and below-average students. The latter group would prepare for unskilled occupations only, their schooling to end at sixteen or seventeen. The education of the average group would permit them to engage in skilled trades or clerical work; they would remain in school until about eighteen. The bright students would be expected to enter the universities and the professional graduate schools. Professor Woodring says nothing to indicate that students would not receive a common schooling in the primary grades (first and second). But already in the third grade they could be taught differently, while at the high school level they would definitively be separated, by subject, into bright, average, and below-average.

Now the interesting thing about this article is not so much Professor Woodring's plan as the way in which *Life* magazine understood (or rather misunderstood) it. At the head of the article appears a half-page chart which probably reflects what an educated *Life* illustrator who has studied the article considers to be its meaning. Even such an erudite organ as *Science* did not take exception to the chart when officially commending the article. The chart must also have been approved by the editors, if not necessarily by the author. Thus it may be more revealing than Dr. Woodring's article of widespread underlying attitudes and expectations for the future.

On this chart we see that the three groups are actually acquiring a different language; and this not just on the high school level, but even in elementary school where they acquire their basic vocabulary, as if to make sure that they will not be able to converse with each other later on. This point is demonstrated for the below-average group, the one bound for unskilled labor, by its use of the words "big horse," where the middle group uses—one must assume for the identical concept—the words "large horse." The fine point of such a difference this reader failed to grasp beyond the fact that possibly it was viewed by Jim Flora (who drew the chart) and the *Life* editor who approved it as a sign of higher intelligence and learning when a five-letter word is used where a three-letter word will do the same job. When we move from these poorer learners to the college preparatory group, the gifted, then the nine-year-olds (mid-age for this group) are remarkable for their use of the words "magnificent steed." I leave it to the imagination of readers to decide what a nine-year-old using such language is like, or any person who thinks it is better to say "magnificent steed" when he wishes to talk about a big horse. A photograph on page 129, showing what look like nine-year-olds, is captioned: "Reading groups study separately in Bay City, Michigan, classroom, a principle Dr. Woodring says should be generally adopted." If magnificent steeds are the outcome, one can only conclude that this special help for the gifted is designed to teach them an artificial language, the only value of which could be to set them off from the "uneducated" rest of the population.

PERHAPS I am unfair in suggesting that the purpose of such a school system would be at least as much to separate an elite from the rest of the population as to secure more scientific talent—something,

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after all, no known school system has so far succeeded in suppressing. So let us look once more at the chart. For some reason, boys are used to represent the gifted (university preparatory) and the least gifted (the future unskilled laborer). The middle group is illustrated by means of girls. Altogether the chart contains fourteen drawings of youngsters. It would have been quite possible to spread both sexes over each group, since each is illustrated by four or five figures. I do not wish to draw conclusions from the fact that the female sex is restricted to the middle group, while the best and the worst are reserved for the boys. Since only girls represent the middle group, we cannot compare it with the two other groups on the basis of dress or attitude; but we can compare the lowest and highest groups.

Now if we assume, as we should, that the way a child comes dressed to school (particularly the elementary school boy) is not reflective of his intelligence or other native endowments, but of the background of his parents, then the implications are clear. Throughout the chart the third group is represented by poorly clothed and poorly groomed youngsters. That they are also depicted as confused or stupid looking is beside the point, since they are supposed to be the least intelligent. Even on entering school at the primary level, the poor learner is drawn with his hair unkempt, wearing a sloppy shirt. The gifted primary boy (who will be the one to go to college or the university) appears neatly combed and dressed. In elementary school, again according to the drawings, the gifted boy wears tie and jacket, while the non-gifted wears only a sweater; he is still unkempt. If we proceed to the high school level, we see our young scholar already wearing a bow tie and elegant jacket; he has by now also acquired spectacles. Indeed, glasses are to be found only in this group; clearly good eyesight is a sign of lower intelligence, while neat dress in boys of eight is a sign of superior intellectual ability. In high school the future unskilled laborer wears only a sweatshirt, never a jacket or a bow tie.

Thus in these drawings the lack of means, or culture in the home, as represented by way of dress and grooming, is shown as a decisive index of who will go to college. The well-dressed son of good middle-class parents will, even in elementary school, not only dress differently, but also speak a language so different from that of the future unskilled laborer that the two may no longer be able to converse freely with each other even if they should want to. Yet all this is by no means new; on the contrary, it is educational old hat. Most European school systems, designed to perpetuate the class system despite free public schools, started at a relatively early age to separate the vast majority of the school population from the supposedly gifted children who, in practice, were those whose parents could give them social, economic, and cultural advantages. The German system is a prime example, but even in the German primary schools the entire school population was provided with identical educational opportunities until about the age of ten.

A case could be made for the proposition that the more democratic nature of our government and social system came about because, in theory, all children are subject to identical educational experiences during their first twelve years in school, while the radical separation of those who are to benefit from higher education takes place only at about the age of eighteen, when the personality is nearly fully formed. True, there are drop-outs from about ninth grade on, but the great division is still that between the college and non-college population, separating fully grown persons from each other. The younger the child, the more his attitude to school and learning, and with it his school achievement, reflects his home background and parental attitudes. It is usually only in high school, often only in the senior years, that the young adult can free himself sufficiently from the handicaps his home background may contain so as to develop mainly in terms of his own native talents. If differentiation is begun at an earlier level, instead of the school's equalizing differences

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in home background it only adds to them the agony of intellectual differences.

Such early division would discriminate in favor of all those children who come from "nice" homes. It would in fact discriminate even more against Negro (and Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc.) than against "poor white" children, as may be seen, for example, from a preliminary study by the Education Testing Service of Princeton (reported in *Newsweek*, September 2, 1957) to determine the relative academic achievement of school children in Atlanta. Surveying the fourth, sixth, and twelfth grade students, it found that the average fourth grade Negro student was scholastically 1.6 years behind the average white fourth-grader, while the Negro twelfth-grader was four years behind. If differentiation were to begin at about second grade level, the average white student would have an incomparably better chance of a superior education than the average Negro student. Not, I should add, because of superior native endowment, but because of the difference in home background.

If we are to be serious about providing a child with a fair chance to succeed academically, even when he comes from a home that does not support his educational efforts, we would have to provide him with teachers who, because of their excellence, could counterbalance the deficiencies of the home background. In many of our present city school systems lip service is at least given to the notion that the best teachers should teach those most difficult to teach, i.e. those who are falling behind. Yet Professor Woodring makes the special point that in high school, "It will be essential that the teachers of Group A [the gifted] be selected for their superior scholarship and intelligence." Thus the best teachers will attend to those who are easiest to teach. And while it is not stated outright, it seems to follow that the poorest teachers will attend to those who are most difficult to teach. Discriminatory as it is, Professor Woodring's proposal on this score is not as revolutionary as it may seem, since quite a few of our large high school systems already have an A, B, and even C grouping, the first being "accelerated" or college preparatory for the gifted, the last based on preparing for the trades. Among some of our most famous high schools we find establishments that have not only three different curricula, but five, sometimes numbered A, B, C, X, and XX. Some large cities have solved the problem in still another way: New York with its high schools for children showing special talents, such as the High School of Music and Art, or Bronx Science High School; Philadelphia with its Central High School; Boston with its Latin High Schools. But most of these at least give all children the same chance up to grades seven or nine, enough time for the children from deprived homes to benefit for at least seven years from equal educational opportunities, however uneven the equipment with which they enter school.

But again, why all this fuss about the gifted child? Have these so-called gifted children been winding up in the coal mines, have so few of them managed to enter Harvard, Yale, City College, or the University of Chicago? Has the present system suddenly stopped working? Do gifted children find there is no longer place for them in the universities; are there fewer scholarships available for them? Are our colleges unwilling to accept them before the age of eighteen? Having for years been connected with the University of Chicago, where strenuous efforts were made to attract not only the gifted but to have them enter college early, I recall only too well that this plan of early entrance had to be modified, simply because not enough students were interested in moving ahead fast academically, and this for good reasons. Gifted youngsters still go to college and graduate school; scholarships and fellowships go begging each year for want of takers; several great universities are ready to accept youngsters at an early age if they show sufficient promise.

All this again leads us back to the ques-

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tion of why the educated classes in this country (particularly the liberals) have become interested in the two problems of desegregation and the gifted at precisely the same time? It appears that the cause is an unconscious desire to create a segregation based on the intellect, and that only by trying to secure this aim for their children can the intelligentsia continue to fight publicly for desegregation on the racial level. Large numbers of the intelligentsia can advocate desegregation of the public schools all the more freely as their own children (the "gifted" children) are already segregated, either by placement in special classes for the gifted, or in private schools, or in the suburbs. It is not that these groups who fight *against* segregation, and *for* special facilities for the gifted, wish to establish a new color line. On the contrary, they want to do away with the old-fashioned color line, to replace the "white color" elite by a more up-to-date "white collar" elite, composed of all highly educated persons of all colors. Their education and language will be so different from the rest that they will live and think, act and interact, on a different plane from the rest of the population.

That the system of separating the groups works, indeed works only too well, and would work even more perniciously the younger the age level at which children are separated, can be seen from what happens when the groups part at the high school level. In those public high schools where special programs for the gifted are set up ("accelerated," "pre-collegiate," etc.) the system certainly works effectively for mutual alienation. Those who attend the special programs, though willing to study hard to remain in the category of "gifted" child, study even harder to make sure they will keep out of the "desegregated" classrooms. It is interesting to see what a strong incentive the latter is to hard work. On the other hand, children placed in the non-collegiate programs, finding themselves marked as a lower breed and now surrounded by all too many who are not interested in acquiring any education, acquire even less of it than they would if there were some good students around with whom they could identify. Some Negro children are in the classes forming these special programs, but they are usually those who have a "better" social background. Thus the lower class whites and Negroes who need very much to be challenged and motivated by being surrounded with examples of intellectual achievement are deprived of just such stimulation to learn. On the other hand, when left behind as second-class citizens (educationally speaking), and with the little support they are apt to derive from home, they find themselves in a predicament which they are poorly equipped to overcome. Dimly realizing this, with few exceptions, they soon feel hopeless. Should spontaneous leadership arise, or outstanding ability develop among some of the children in the non-gifted group, such individuals are drawn away by being encouraged to join their intellectual peers, the gifted group. All this is happening already, and is kept within bounds only by the eight preceding years all children share in school, and because this separation is still viewed as basically undesirable. The underlying ideal is still a common curriculum for all. But all this would cease if the separation were made early, and came to be viewed as desirable.

BESIDES the wish to beat Russia in the cold war race for superior technology, there is a general concern that our curricula do not do justice to the gifted, that they are held back and possibly thwarted in their growth by learning situations designed for the average child. This is true, but there is another side to the problem: by giving premiums to the gifted child because of his achievement, he may be pushed beyond what is good for him, encouraged to overstrain his abilities in order to remain at the top, and in consequence find himself at the end of his education intellectually exhausted, if not more seriously damaged. Moreover, while there can be little doubt that, academically speaking, special classes for gifted children may help them to graduate and

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take their place in life sooner, problems are created by taking them out of the regular schoolroom situation.

Thus, among the arguments for special classes for the gifted is that quite a few of the children who are at the top of their classes state that they are bored in class during the school year. But it could be argued that tasks already learned by the gifted child were repeated by him because they were reassigned for the benefit of the slower learner; in this way a great deal of over-learning characterizes the school experience of most gifted children. In the absence of controlled studies of this problem, it seems quite possible that it was just such over-learning, and with it the much greater recall and ease in meeting intellectual tasks which are typical results of over-learning, that helped these children later on to do better than their age mates.

I have observed closely what has happened when a gifted child is taken out of a very accelerated and highly competitive school situation, and placed in one where the course content is so easy for him as to be "boring," according to adults and his own statements. No longer having to worry about keeping up, this student, who in the special school for gifted children lacked time to develop his own (rather than a teacher-induced) critical judgment, began to reflect spontaneously on many problems, some of which were outside of what was taught in the new school. He acquired, again on his own, a much deeper appreciation of life, art, literature, and other human beings.

Another question that could be raised is whether the feeling of security which the gifted child acquires because of the ease with which he learns, does not later make it possible for him to tackle difficult intellectual problems. If, on the other hand, such a child is put into a special class where learning is not so easy for him, he himself might come to feel that he had only average abilities, and hence might lack the courage to work on difficult problems later on. Again, while it is argued that to place a gifted child in an average group creates boredom in the gifted child, it has also been held that to mix children of different abilities in a learning situation creates anxiety in the slower learners. This may be so, but how do anxieties become manageable? Only through socialization, through working together, through a friendly relationship with those whom we feel to be superior—in this case the faster-learning children in the classroom.

Because it is so difficult to agree on what is the "best" education for the child, the argument is often switched from what is best for the child to what is supposedly best for society. We are told that we need more scientists or more engineers to "survive" and therefore we must swiftly move ahead those who have talents in such fields. But should this be done at the price of their personal happiness? Also, do we really know what we will need thirty years hence to survive? Might we not for survival need new ideas about how to organize a world-wide society, new ideas to fire the imagination, rather than technicians or physicists? And since ideas mature slowly, maybe what we need is not a speeding up but a slowing down of our all-too-rapid pace, with long vacations for reading and thinking, free time to play and grow, rather than the busyness of competitive sports or camp activities?

By now our educational system seems to have neglected the slow learner, the gifted, *and* the average child, a situation that is probably due to the fact that our schools were supposed to bring about the millennium, and naturally failed. Maybe the answer, without assuring the millennium and without being able to do equal justice to all children, is one that helps the average and the gifted child by helping the slow learners. I have stressed the importance of a common school experience for all until at least the high school level, preferably later. Here I would like to go further. At present we collect all children at the ripe age of five and drop them into one and the same school situation, although their preparation in home background is so different as to skew the

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actual school experience; then we hope that the socially handicapped will catch up with the others by the time they get to high school. Let us, instead, for a period of a year or two, help prepare these "underprivileged" in home background to make better use of their future classroom learning. Let us try to speed up these slow learners, and use the first two years of their education to persuade those who have come doubting that the classroom is a good place, even for them. Let us slowly educate these five-year-olds in the manners, attitudes, and will to learn, in the ability to sit still and concentrate, and all the rest, which are the prerequisites of being able to make best use of the teacher and the school. We would have to employ our very best teachers for this difficult task, and make the preparatory classes very small. But we could and would help our slow learners (with the exception of those whose mental equipment is considerably below par) turn into at least average learners. Then, at about seven, they could all start school together with a better chance for all. Along the same line of reasoning it would follow that our newcomers to the big cities—whether from Puerto Rico, the Ozarks, or the deep South—should be given the benefit of two years of the very best teaching at whatever age they arrive, before they are introduced into the mainstream of our educational system.

Despite these comments on the gifted child, I am not suggesting that we should leave well enough alone. On the contrary, much can be improved in our present school system. The point I am trying to make is simply that arguments for the special education of the gifted do not yet rest on solid ground, any more than do arguments to the contrary, only some of which have been mentioned.

If we, the educated group, feel that—with an end to racial segregation and with the pressure of the cold war—we have to create a new elite through an educational caste system by creating a new class of schoolmen, a new scholasticism (only this time not based on Aristotle, but on relativity, quantum theory, or what not) then we should at least not betray the essence of our calling, which is intellectual honesty. Let us be honest about our intentions and state them openly. In doing so, it will at least be easier to recognize the similarity of a caste system based on intellectual gifts and educational achievement with that of Mandarin China, a comparison which suggests the thought whether such a society is likely to do well in competition with other social systems. Such thoughts may lead to some second reflections about the desirability of the recently proposed special school systems for gifted children, while there is still time.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

JUSTICE

From the "Religion of Reason"

HERMANN COHEN

HERMANN COHEN'S great posthumous work, *Die Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums* (The Religion of Reason from the Sources of Judaism), has never been published in English translation, but here we give a second, condensed excerpt from it; the first appeared in our December 1956 "Cedars," both selections having been translated by William Wolf. The interested reader will find a biographical note appended to the first of these two selections; for a full exposition of Cohen's relation to German philosophy, and his contribution to Jewish thought, the reader may wish to go back to one of the earliest issues of COMMENTARY, December 1945, where Cohen's essay "The Kingdom of God" appeared, followed up (January 1946) by his discourse on the "Sabbath."

JUSTICE is the foremost of the Divine attributes: *The Lord is just in all His ways and gracious in all His works* (Ps. 145:17); *Thy justice is an everlasting justice* (Ps. 119:142). Justice is compared to holiness: *and God the Holy One is sanctified through justice* (Isa. 5:16). Justice is one of the features of the Messiah: *Justice shall be the girdle of his loins* (Isa. 11:5). An end to warfare is the negative criterion of the Messianic era, its positive side is the knowledge and practice of justice: *Neither shall they learn war any more* (Isa. 2:4); *The inhabitants of the earth learn justice* (Isa. 26:9). Justice thus becomes the sign of the Messianic Age. The Pentateuch makes justice an absolute command: *Justice, justice shalt thou follow* (Deut. 16:20). It is therefore the foundation of the state.

It is true that the Hebrew word for justice and righteousness (*Tsedakah*) also denotes piety, but the added meaning only testifies to the basic force of justice. It is not that righteousness is weakened into charity, but that, through the communal virtue of charity, righteousness becomes a broader piety. As in the case of humility, justice, too, is transformed into piety through social considerations.

As justice is the basis of the state, and the core of social ethics, so is it also the first principle of civil legislation and the foundation for the so-called Noachic laws. The complaints of the Prophets are largely concerned with false judgment, and they see in God the advocate of the stranger, the orphan, and the widow. The whole concept of theocracy is made possible through the idea of justice, since without it religion could not be identified with a constitution, and God could not be King, either of Israel or of mankind. All the objections raised against the idea of a theocracy fall away when the religious principle of justice is adopted for the state. Through justice, every state becomes a theocracy, the principle of religion is realized in the state.

It is significant that Samuel—the personified theocracy, combining the role of judge with that of prophet—had to yield to the kingdom, in which the two were separated. It is equally significant that when taking leave of his people and giving an account of his past administration, he called attention to the qualities of justice and righteousness: *Whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? or whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand*

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have I taken a ransom to blind mine eyes therewith? (I Sam. 12:3). . . .

How are we to explain that, on the one side, *Tsedakah,* justice, is connected with love and thus becomes the universal term for piety, and on the other, it is identified with the rather limited concept of charity, which again is subordinated to *Gmillut chassadim,* lovingkindness? . . . We recognize in this apparent contradiction the idea that the absolute virtue of justice must be complemented by a relative one which is based on love rather than on honor. Therefore in God as well as in man love and justice go together: *I the Lord speak justice, I declare things that are right* (Isa. 45:19). *I am the Lord who exercise mercy, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight* (Jer. 9:23).

Nevertheless justice, as laid down in the legal constitution, remains the absolute foundation of the state and of the community. Therefore the Prophets base their legislation for the underprivileged not on love and mercy, but on justice. Even for the criminal, justice is the true love, restoring to him responsibility and human dignity. On the other hand it is justice which, by testing a man's state of mind and its susceptibility to the world around him, discovers the idea of *Shegagah,* error, which in turn leads to atonement. . . .

HERE we must mention the strange thought which means so much for Messianism: the concept of the Servant of the Lord, who takes the sufferings upon himself. . . .

The whole mythology of original sin and of suffering as punishment can only be abolished through a bold social insight. If suffering was to be regarded always as the visitation of Divine punishment, then the innocent would be under Divine punishment. The true bearers of human suffering are the poor; thus Divine punishment cannot be identical with suffering in general. Suffering is not punishment. Human suffering—mainly suffering of the poor—is in God's hand. And God is the God of justice as well as the God of love, justice and love are interchangeable with Him. The sufferings of the poor are based on God's loving justice. Justice is love, and not only punishment. . . .

Sufferings become "sufferings of love" (*yissurin shel ahavah*). This relation is in the Prophet's mind when he considers his people's history, and it implies the transfiguration of the suffering of the Exile. In Messianism, patriotism becomes a philosophy of history. Here, too, is revealed the great share of reason in religion. Not only do individuals suffer for their age, but nations are chosen to suffer, among them Israel. Amos had already mentioned that the election of Israel meant suffering. It was a new insight of Isaiah's that this apparent punishment was vicarious suffering. Thus all suspicion connected with the election of Israel is removed. Being chosen to teach the doctrine of the One God means being chosen for vicarious suffering for the idol worshippers and for all those who have not yet attained to the recognition of Him. Nor does this meaning of election violate God's justice, which has now to prove itself in the history of all mankind. Also, even polytheism has its cultural value, though it nevertheless remains sinful. For if the idolaters were punished for their idolatry, they would be deprived of the vital energy which they need for their creative role in history.

And is it not Israel's greatest happiness, a happiness which outshines their entire martyrdom, that they *dwell*[*est*] *in the covert of the Most High, and abide*[*st*] *in the shadow of the Almighty* (Ps. 91:1). All apparent victories of pessimism over optimism, of shadow over sun, of ill luck over good, are, theoretically as well as morally, vanities. Human relations, at all times and in all places, are conditioned by the events of history, and the Prophet could not have found a better way to account for his people's fate than by holding justice, manifested as vicarious suffering, responsible for it. Israel suffers the martyrdom of monotheism. This martyrdom is certainly not punishment . . . the mission brings happiness. . . . Vicarious suffering therefore does not present an exception in Divine or human justice, but rather a profound confirmation of the fact that suffering is not simply a form of Divine punishment. Justice is not redeemed by punishment, but in the suffering which man recognizes in his historical mission, while submitting himself to the yoke of God whom he acknowledges as the One God of mankind.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

PREJUDICE IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

A Critique of Some Recent Formulations

WILLIAM PETERSEN

DURING the past ten years or so the study of prejudice, which has figured importantly in American sociology virtually since it established itself as a separate discipline, has developed several new emphases. "Intergroup relations" are no longer studied merely as one aspect of American social life, but as a problem that exists in many countries, and indeed as a factor in international relations. In the United States, moreover, the analysis of intergroup relations is no longer restricted to racial or ethnic minorities, but now includes minorities defined by religious, cultural, occupational, or political criteria. There has been a tendency, finally, to shift our interest from a social to a psychological framework—from behavior patterns or institutions to attitudes or beliefs, from discrimination to prejudice, from a sociologist's to a social psychologist's view of minority-majority relations.

There is nothing sacrosanct about the traditional analysis of group prejudice, and there is no reason why another generation of social scientists should not reflect its new interests by developing a different conceptual framework; but in my opinion a good deal of the revision of the older theory has not represented an improvement. Very often basic principles underlying a study, say, of Negro-white patterns in the United States have been applied to the analysis of superficially similar relations to which they are not relevant. In this essay an attempt will be made to spell out some of these principles and thus to delimit the range of situations to which the concept of prejudice is properly applicable.

LITERALLY, *prejudice* means prejudgment, a judgment before knowledge. By group prejudice, then, we should mean both (1) a judgment, an evaluation of an ethnic or other group and its individual members, and (2) an incomplete or otherwise inadequate factual base to this evaluation. How far the concept has departed from this original meaning can be best indicated by citing a few examples. Thus, four experts writing in the authoritative *Handbook of Social Psychology* define the word as follows: "By prejudice we mean an ethnic attitude in which the reaction tendencies are predominantly negative. In other words, for us a prejudice is simply an unfavorable ethnic attitude."* According to one of the best and most widely used texts in social psychology, "A prejudice is an unfavorable attitude—a predisposition to perceive, act, think, and feel in ways that are 'against' rather than 'for' another person or group." It is contrasted with a "predisposition toward intimacy and/or helpfulness."† Or, according to a recent sociology text, "Prejudice refers to those negative attitudes that create a predisposition toward unfavorable responses to a racial or minority group."**

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*John Harding, Bernard Kutner, Harold Proshansky, and Isidor Chein, "Prejudice and Ethnic Relations," in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, ed. Gardner Lindzey (1954), II, 1021-1061.

†Theodore M. Newcomb, *Social Psychology* (1950), pp. 574-575.

**T. Lynn Smith, *Social Problems* (1955), pp. 423-424.

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One element common to these definitions—and more could be cited—is the substitution of "adverse judgment" for "prejudgment," or, in other words, the removal of the concept of prejudice from a factual context. But, one could ask, might not a "negative" or unfavorable attitude be, not a prejudgment, but rather the end product of a conscientious effort to arrive at the truth? Indeed this might be so, we are told by the first of these books, but "common experience would suggest that . . . the objective support for stereotypes is at best a minor aspect of stereotypic thinking." Such a comment, however, begs the question by identifying unfavorable attitudes as stereotypes, which by definition are not based directly or mainly on empirical data. Surely not *all* unfavorable attitudes concerning *all* ethnic groups are prejudices, in the sense of pre-factual judgments. For example, the statement that Egyptians are 77 per cent illiterate does not reflect a prejudice. On the other hand, many stereotypes (in the same sense of pre-factual judgments) are either favorable or, at worst, ambivalent. Is it insulting, per se, to call the Irish witty, or the Jews clever, or the Germans industrious?

THAT an attitude can be designated as prejudiced, without relating it to the relevant facts, is often merely asserted as a bald statement; when this thesis is defended, the usual argument is that since all groups are to some degree heterogeneous, a general statement about any one of them, or about any individual member, reflects a prejudice. Thus according to the liberal cliché there is only one race, the human race. *Race,* in any other sense than a synonym for *species,* is, in Jacques Barzun's phrase, "the modern superstition," as though there were no empirical basis for classifying, say, Chinese, Bantus, and Englishmen into separate categories. The argument rests on the fact that racial differentiation is not sharp or permanent, that however one classifies races there will be intermediate subgroups, if not immediately then certainly after the gene pools have been re-aligned during the next historical period. On the same basis, however, it would be reasonable to deny the reality of larger biological groups, for the differentiation between species or orders or even phyla is often arbitrary in the same way and is sometimes a point of dispute among specialists in systematics. Race is a fact; the superstition, the abomination, is *racism.*

Cultural differences are also often seen as non-existent; they are defined, as we have seen, as "stereotypes." In one study, for example, Princeton undergraduates were asked to name the traits characteristic of ten different ethnic groups.* The Chinese, as one instance, were designated as "superstitious, sly, conservative, tradition-loving, loyal to family ties, industrious, meditative, reserved, very religious, ignorant, deceitful, and quiet." It is a commonplace that the Chinese family is an extraordinarily tight and resilient institution, and Sinologists would agree that the Chinese are typically —or were until very recently—"loyal to family ties." The Chinese are also ordinarily "ignorant," if by this we mean illiterate; but it would be difficult to determine whether they are "sly." The stereotype thus comprises statements that are true, some that can be interpreted as true, and some that cannot be validated at all. But the authors make no attempt to differentiate in empirical terms among the twelve traits. Like other analysts of stereotypes, they implicitly maintain that a judgment of an ethnic group —*any* judgment—is a prejudgment.

Sometimes the irrelevance of facts to one's judgment of a people is stated explicitly. The moral yardsticks with which we measure the relative worth of cultures, it is maintained, are themselves part of the cultures, and one may not evaluate any society except by the standards that its members use to judge themselves. Some peoples like beef, some pork, and some human flesh; it is all, as Molotov once said of fascism, a matter of taste. This version of "cultural relativism," as it was developed by anthropologists a half century ago, was a necessary condition to understanding a primitive culture in its own terms; for if the equality of all cultures had not been postulated, a representative of Western civilization living with a tribe of two hundred naked food-gatherers would have been able to see nothing but their patent inferiority.

The classic statement of cultural relativism with respect to moral values is, perhaps, the late Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture.* I use it as one of the readings in my introductory sociology class, and even the dullest freshman can detect that her pretense not to judge among the three primitive peoples she describes is—

*Daniel Katz and Kenneth W. Braly, "Verbal Stereotypes and Racial Prejudice," in *Readings in Social Psychology,* ed. Guy E. Swanson, Theodore M. Newcomb, and Eugene L. Hartley (1952).

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a pretense. The brighter ones understand also that this was in part a comment on American culture; the contrast between the warlike Dobu or the highly competitive Kwakiutl on the one side, and the quiet, peaceable Zuni on the other, was an anthropologist's restatement of the reactionary-progressive, aggressive-peaceloving dichotomy of the mid-1930's. (Today, however, when a different sort of dichotomy is the fashion, the Zuni seem suspiciously "other-directed," if not downright "conformist.")

Two kinds of generalizations are made in the social sciences, statistical and modal. The first, statistical, is of the type, "City people have small families," or "Jews vote Democratic"—meaning that the designated group shows proportionately more of a measurable quality than the rest of a defined population. A proscription of such generalizations on the ground that they do not apply to *all* individuals in the group would, if generally applied, mean the end of social science and of a good deal of physical science as well. Virtually every statement that we make about human groups, comparing the middle class with the working class or urban dwellers with rural, can be only a statement of probability. If we demanded universality of every generalization there would be none; for just as there are different kinds of Negroes so there are different kinds of city-dwellers, and just as there are persons marginal to "Negroness," so there are suburbanites.

A MODAL generalization is an attempt to transcend the totality of statistical statements and describe the typical rather than the average. For example, the Chicago anthropologist Robert Redfield has distinguished two ways of life, "urban" and "folk" society; and Ruth Benedict, in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword,* has characterized the Japanese as a paradoxical combination of delicate artistry and militarism. To delineate the Japanese or any other people as a "type," however, is to attempt so tenuous an abstraction from the factual base that the result may be difficult to distinguish from a "stereotype." Indeed, some of the studies of "national character" have been marked by gross bias (e.g., Brickner, *Is Germany Incurable?*), and others have blown up dubious Freudian hypotheses to preposterous dimensions (e.g., Gorer's works on the Great Russians and the Americans).

It is not usual, however, to characterize such scholarly efforts as prejudiced. In the *Handbook of Social Psychology* noted above, the chapter preceding the one on prejudice reviews many of the studies on national character, and the reader passing on from one to the other may well be puzzled by the sudden change in climate. Identical generalizations—of the type, "The Irish are witty"—are discussed in the chapter on national character by referring to the object, the Irish, and in the chapter on prejudice by referring to the subject, the person making the statement. Brickner and Gorer have been sharply criticized, but the criticism has always been of their works; no one has suggested that Brickner has an "authoritarian personality" or that Gorer's frustrations have made him aggressive.

Even when the empirical context of prejudice is acknowledged as pertinent, it is not certain that the relevant facts are indeed being examined to judge whether a person's attitudes are prejudgments. One article tells us, for instance, that group prejudice is "a type of stereotype which does not correspond with the facts" —for example, "dislike or disgust for the 'dirty Japs,' the 'Red menace,' the not-to-be-trusted Catholics or capitalists or labor unions or foreigners."* The very list of examples indicates how difficult it may be in the social sciences to come by "the" facts. Although not arranged in an order to suggest this, the list constitutes a continuum from broad, heterogeneous aggregates ("foreigners") to clearly defined political organizations with rather definite purposes (trade unions, world Communism). The difference between the two is fundamental. Antipathy to "foreigners," since it cannot be based on knowledge of all of them as a group, *must* be prejudice; and it makes good sense to look for the cause of such prejudice in the psyche of the *subject.* Hatred of trade unions or of world Communism may also be and often is a neurotic symptom; but in this case the *object* is clearly enough defined to make possible an unambiguous attitude among the well informed, and given certain values this could be sharply negative without being in the slightest a prejudgment.

If we define group prejudice as a judgment about a group before the facts concerning it are known, it is thus possible to demonstrate the existence of prejudice with reasonable stand-

*Ronald Lippitt and Marian Radke, "New Trends in the Investigation of Prejudice," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 244 (March 1946), 167-176.

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ards of reliability. The "facts" may be demonstrably false, as with the legend about the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. Or the "group" may be so vague as to lack any definable characteristics, as with "foreigners." Or the sentiment may be so strongly expressed ("All Germans are pigs") as to suggest no relation to empirical evidence. In many specific cases, however, it is extremely difficult to distinguish prejudice from a tentative judgment based on the inadequate facts that happen to be available. In order to make this distinction in general terms, it is necessary to state a bit more definitely what we mean by a *group*.

WHAT is a minority group? A statistical category constituting less than half—persons whose last name begins with "A," for example—does not comprise a minority in a sociological sense. There must also be some feeling of group coherence and a specific pattern of interaction with the rest of the population. But a minority is still a group relatively small in numbers. It confuses the issue to equate this originally statistical term with the political concept of subordination or the sociological one of discrimination. Nevertheless, such an identification is frequently made, either by implication or explicitly. As Louis Wirth has put it, "The people whom we regard as a minority may actually, from a numerical standpoint, be a majority."*

Such an extension of the meaning of the word is not only semantically inelegant but also conceptually impermissible, if only because it glosses over the important distinction between democratic and non-democratic societies. The very idea of a minority suffering from discrimination implies a democratic moral judgment. In most of history, as well as in most of the world today, the overwhelming social division has been between a small ruling elite and a vast ruled mass, with the latter not significantly differentiated by the possession of civil rights or their lack. All of the 97 per cent of the Soviet population not members of the Communist party, for instance, suffer from what in democratic terms would be considered discrimination, but this is no reason for designating this 97 per cent a "minority." The "American dilemma," as Gunnar Myrdal termed it, reflects a conflict between the democratic ideal of equal opportunity for all and the actual inequality. In this sense, there is no Nazi and no Soviet dilemma. It is only in a democratic state that what Tocqueville called "the tyranny of the majority" can exist, and "minority problems" in the traditional sense are thus restricted to democratic societies.

The most significant minority in American society, both numerically and in other respects, is the Negro tenth of the population, and the analysis of Negro-white relations often has been used as a model for analyzing other intergroup relations. Negroes differ from most other minorities, however, in three fundamental respects:

1. It is meaningful to set the Negro tenth off against the non-Negro nine-tenths—or, in Wirth's terms, the "minority" against the "dominant." Lutherans, for example, also comprise a small proportion of the American population, but it would not ordinarily be appropriate to designate the rest simply as "non-Lutherans." In this case, the division obviously should not be into two sectors but into the many religious denominations in the United States. While there are also intermediate groups between Negroes and non-Negroes, both other minorities and whites committed to the fight against discrimination, the dichotomy in this case reflects the most significant feature of Negro-white relations. A minority, that is to say, is a relatively small group that is opposed by a relatively unified majority.

This distinction has been ignored in many recent works, for example one on religious life and "discrimination" in the Netherlands—W. Goddijm's *Catholic Minority and Protestant Dominant*. This study illustrates very well the dangers involved in transporting sociological concepts from one culture to another. Dutch Catholics, who constitute about 38 per cent of the population, are the largest coherent group in the political and social life of the country. The remaining 62 per cent, too heterogeneous to be considered a unit, are not "dominant"; and the Dutch Catholics are not a "minority" but a plurality.

2. Negroes are set off from the white majority by skin color and hair texture; and such racial characteristics, according to the unanimous judgment of present-day biologists, are all superficial, irrelevant to the roles that Negroes could play in American society. Races do not differ in intelligence, diligence, "criminality," or other psychic qualities of comparable

*Louis Wirth, "The Problem of Minority Groups," in *The Science of Man in the World Crisis*, ed. Ralph Linton (1945), pp. 347-372.

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significance. The racist doctrine that Negroes are inferior in such respects, however, has led to cultural patterns by which they are *made* inferior. If, for example, Negroes are defined as innately unintelligent, then they need have only second-rate schools—and the inadequate training they get there results, indeed, in an over-all lower level of intelligence. That is to say, the segregation of Negroes from white society depends on only two factors: the superstition of racism, and the social policies that follow from this superstition.

3. The same point can be made positively rather than negatively: the American Negro is wholly assimilationist. His many demands can be summed up in a single one—that he become invisible in white society. He wants his ghettos to merge into the rest of the cities they now disfigure; he wants the differentials by occupation, by mortality, by illegitimacy, by any other social statistic, to become a thing of the past; he even wants (if this were possible) his color to disappear. No American of European stock, not even a descendant of the first colonists, is so thoroughly embedded in American culture as the typical Negro, so lacking in vestigial emotional ties to the "home country." (To be sure, some Negro intellectuals now have a sympathy with such Western-educated Africans as Nkrumah, Premier of Ghana, but this is not a bond with another country.)

But simply to disappear is not the usual aspiration of a minority. In Europe, on the contrary, the typical relation has been the minority's attempt to retain intact its language or other cultural attributes, in spite of the dominant group's efforts to absorb it completely. An American who studies the reports of the League of Nations or the United Nations commissions on minority questions is likely to be somewhat startled by them; for in the judgment of these international bodies, "the" minority problem is typified by the European pattern rather than by Negro-white relations in the United States. This estimate would seem to be justified, moreover, for even the other minorities in American society tend to one degree or another to approach the European type.

Most minorities in the United States, thus, identify with the general American culture in terms of "universals," but want to maintain their own "alternative" values.* For example, members of the various churches are at one with the rest of the population in upholding the democratic credo, but differ with respect to their several dogmas. In the United States such a differentiation is regarded as not merely permissible but good; but even a society that considers cultural variation to be healthy cannot permit it over an infinite range. Thus, the Mormon practice of polygamy was declared to be illegitimate, even for this very small sect. Whether in the particular case this was a correct decision is not the question; the point is rather that some general values are felt to be so absolute that no alternative to them can be tolerated, and if the line is not drawn at polygamy then it would have to be at cannibalism or ritual murder or what have you.

Sometimes minority groups, on the other hand, consider their different values of such fundamental importance that, by one means or another, they try to impose such values on the rest of the population, to transform them from alternatives to universals. Thus, there has been an attempt on the part of Fundamentalist Protestants to make Prohibition the law of the land; on the part of Catholics to regulate all marriages in terms of their dogma on divorce and birth control; on the part of Zionists to influence American foreign policy in the Middle East. Such activities are completely legitimate; they are the stuff of which democracy is made.

What is not legitimate, however, is to behave like a pressure group and at the same time try to retain the protection morally due a minority. This kind of opportunism has worked well for ethnic and religious minorities, and now occupational groups have also begun to define themselves as minorities. We are told by an officer of the National Grange that farmers, who now comprise only 13 per cent of the American population, are therefore a "minority group," and that higher education "must shoulder increasing responsibility for helping minority groups acquaint the vast majority of the population, especially the thought leaders, with the problems and characteristics of their particular segment of the business and professional world."† That is, American colleges

*The terms are from Ralph Linton's *Study of Man* (1936). I have discussed the differentiation at greater length in an earlier article in COMMENTARY, "Immigration and Acculturation" (November 1956).

†Roy E. Battles, "Higher Education and Agriculture," in *Higher Education and the Society It Serves*, ed. Raymond F. Howes (1956), pp. 44-55.

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ought to set themselves up as propaganda agents for the farmers; but if for farmers, then why not also for plumbers, and physicians, and service-station attendants—and professors of sociology?

That one's attitude toward various groups should differ according to what these groups stand for would not seem to be a very remarkable statement. In an area less dominated by sentimentality and confusion than the analysis of ethnic relations, it would be no contribution to point out that to fight discrimination against Negroes, to disagree with Catholics about the moral legitimacy of birth control, and to abhor and oppose Communism, are not inconsistent attitudes simply because all three are "minority" groups. In a very large proportion of recent writing on this subject, however, such a patent distinction has been passed over, either explicitly or by drawing our attention elsewhere.

One way of avoiding this rather obvious differentiation has been, as we have noted, to concentrate on the allegedly prejudiced person rather than on the object of his alleged prejudice. Hatred of Negroes is typically irrational, and anti-Catholicism or anti-Communism is often irrational. If we conceive of prejudice as the expression of irrationality of the *subject* and devote our main effort to understanding the mental process that results in such an attitude, it is a matter of relative indifference what the *object* of the prejudice may be. This emphasis, of course, has been in part a reflection of the professional interests of psychologists, but it is remarkable, too, how much it has overlapped with a tolerance of Soviet totalitarianism. From the point of view of Communists and their sympathizers, it has been very convenient to analyze, say, anti-Semitism and anti-Communism—though not usually anti-Catholicism—as analogous expressions of a sick mind.

PERHAPS the most important of the early expressions of the emphasis on the subjective and psychological was John Dollard's *Frustration and Aggression,* issued by the Institute of Human Relations at Yale University in 1939. The thesis of this work, that the frustration of a desire typically leads to aggressive attitudes and behavior toward those regarded as actual or potential frustrators, was developed so broadly that the authors very nearly succeeded in bringing all of human history within its confines. The theme is introduced with a *solo piccolo*: little James wants an ice-cream cone, is denied it, has a temper tantrum. This reaction might have been avoided by putting "the aggressive response into a response-sequence that leads to non-rewards"—or, translating, by punishing James. As he grows up, however, he will find that life is full of frustrations and that in many cases the aggressive behavior allegedly resulting from them is not non-rewarded. Thus, with the theme fully orchestrated: "In Marxian doctrine, the theories of the class-struggle and of the nature of the state depend to some extent . . . on the frustration-aggression principle. . . . In his *The State and Revolution,* [Lenin] states plainly: 'The State is the product and the manifestation of the *irreconcilability* of class antagonisms. The State arises when, where, and to the extent that the class antagonisms *cannot* be objectively reconciled.' " The Leninist theory of the state as the "special repressive force" is thus subsumed under Freud's theory that all culture frustrates the primal libidinous desires of man.

A theory that encompasses everything from ice-cream cones to class struggle would not leave out group prejudice: "The existence of a social prejudice against a group of people is evidence, first, that those who have the prejudice have been frustrated and, secondly, that they are expressing their aggression or part of it in fairly uniform fashion." However, this frustration-aggression theory, even if we accept it as valid, tells us nothing about prejudice. Frustration is a universal component of human existence and the interesting question is not whether within each psyche this frustration develops into aggression, but why some of the aggression should be expressed in some "fairly uniform fashion." The theory that a minority group is a "scapegoat" implies that the scapegoat might just as well have been anyone else, not only that the victim is innocent of the charges made but that the charge has no relevance to the social context.

Thus, if the anti-Soviet feeling in the United States is due to psychically generated aggression, then the problem is to find a substitute scapegoat. "If one can find a villain who is opposing cooperative behavior and get the group to attack that villain, then cooperative behavior might emerge" (Professor Erich Lindemann, Harvard University). "Couldn't the scapegoat be the Congressmen who oppose the Marshall Plan? . . . Here is the possibility for an alternative scapegoat" (Professor Bernard T. Feld, Massachusetts Institute of Technology). "Isn't

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it conceivable that our objective should be to recognize the scapegoating mechanism and the projectivity mechanism? . . . For instance, you expose some of the Red-baiters, and show just what's biting them. Or you analyze a good case of race prejudice" (Professor Gordon W. Allport, Harvard University). This whole discussion—revolving around the question, "Is our attitude toward Russia based on deliberately falsified information, or on misinterpretation?" (Dr. Ralph W. Burhoe, executive officer of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences)—is a fascinating document.*

The most influential application of psychological concepts to the analysis of prejudice is *The Authoritarian Personality*, by T. W. Adorno and his associates. The thesis of this work, in brief, is that different patterns of child-rearing in the United States have led to two contrasting types of personality, designated as "authoritarian" and "democratic," and that prejudice or the lack of it is essentially a reflection of these two psyches. "Historical factors or economic forces operating in our society to promote or to diminish ethnic prejudices are clearly beyond the scope of our investigation." In the eight years since it was published, *The Authoritarian Personality* has been subjected to a barrage of criticism and paid the homage of many imitative studies; a bibliography of works discussing it—which is not even a complete one—runs to 230 items.† It is impossible to do justice to so extensive a body of work here; I will only repeat the one point I am seeking to make—that the concentration by these psychologists on the allegedly prejudiced person has also facilitated a confusion between prejudice and an unfavorable judgment objectively grounded.

ONLY a naive person would be unable to distinguish in principle between minorities like the Negroes and those typified by Communists, but unfortunately many of those who write on the subject of ethnic relations are naive about Soviet society. Among American social scientists (apart from a handful of experts), the ignorance that still remains about the Soviet Union is great, and—in spite of the tremendous bibliography on the subject—nowhere greater than in the matter of the Soviet minorities. One need have read very little on ethnic relations in the United States, particularly in books published before about 1950, to become surfeited with statements—even in works of well-known and generally responsible scholars—that the Soviet government follows a policy toward its minorities "which accords with the best scientific knowledge and the most enlightened moral principles."** The same sentiment, that "the Russians have welcomed cultural differences and they have refused to treat them as *inferiorities*," was disseminated to a mass audience of more than a million readers in the form of a Public Affairs pamphlet.‡ For persons interested in combating ethnic prejudice, the clear implication of the alleged lack of it in the Soviet Union was that our tolerance must be extended to include both that enlightened regime and its American representatives.

LET me sum up. With respect to ethnic minorities, it is generally true that the problems surrounding group relations derive less from actual differences than from the way these differences are interpreted. But there is a real and significant difference between, for example, Communism and democracy, and to understand why a man is anti-Communist it is necessary first to look not into his mind but at Soviet society. The tolerance that in a democratic society is morally due ethnic minorities cannot legitimately be extended to totalitarian groups.

The difference is a fundamental one, and the way to maintain it is to analyze alleged prejudices in a factual context. That is, I am pleading for the abandonment of the definition of prejudice that has become usual in recent years: simply a hostile attitude; and a return to an understanding of it as an attitude based on incomplete knowledge.

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*See *Journal of Social Issues*, 4:1 (Winter 1948), pp. 21-41.

†Richard Christie and Peggy Cook, "A Guide to Published Literature Relating to the Authoritarian Personality through 1956," *Journal of Psychology*, 45 (1958), pp. 171-191.

**Wirth, *op. cit.* Wirth's authorities for this remarkable dictum were two—Bernhard J. Stern, who till his death was at least a close sympathizer with the American Communist party, and the chief Soviet expert on the subject, the author of *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, Joseph Stalin.

‡Ruth Benedict and Gene Weltfish, *The Races of Mankind* (1943), p. 26. The sentence has been deleted from the 16th edition (1956), but this continues to discuss ethnic prejudice as though it were limited to Nazi Germany and the United States.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Dubnow's History

To the Editor of Commentary:

Professor Oscar Handlin, in his review, in your August issue, of the essays by Simon Dubnow which I collected and edited under the title *Nationalism and History*, allows himself a number of critical observations that are more the product of his intuitive imagination and his own ideological preconceptions than a careful reading of the essays . . . or of the other historical works of Dubnow. . . . Since Dubnow himself is not among the living, and since there are basic issues of Jewish life and culture involved, I feel it incumbent upon me . . . to clarify the points raised by your reviewer.

1. Professor Handlin condescendingly speaks of the "parochial limitations" of the culture in which Dubnow worked and he writes that Dubnow "lacked adequate contact with the ideas of the social scientists of Western Europe. . . ." I am inclined to believe that Professor Handlin here gives evidence of a stereotyped view which Americans have of Russian scholarship and especially which American Jews have of Russian Jews. Despite Sputnik and all, there still lingers in American writers the notion of a pre-revolutionary Russia culturally apart from the main stream of European scholarship. A culture area which produced historians like Kliuchevski and Soloviev, Kareev and Miliukov, and in which were grounded the basic foundations of the work of Paul Vinogradoff, Rostovtzeff, George Vernadsky, Pitirim Sorokin, and other older Russian émigrés, can well stand comparison with "Western" social scientists, or better still, they are part and parcel of Western social science. In the same way, many American Jews have an image of every Russian Jew as a "ghetto" Jew, carrying on his cultural activities wholly apart from contact with the scholarship of the Western world. This was indeed true of the rabbinical scholars of the *yeshivoth*, but hardly the case with the emancipated, secularized Russian Jewish intelligentsia of St. Petersburg, Moscow, or Odessa. . . . Even a casual glance at the bibliographical sections of Dubnow's *Weltgeschichte* will indicate his wide familiarity with the broad literature of Western European scholarship. Ample evidence of the same is found in the text and footnotes of the volume reviewed.

2. Professor Handlin takes Dubnow to task for failing to understand "the impact of general, external forces on the Jewish community" and for being insensitive to "broad economic and social trends." It is true that the young Dubnow, in his "Essay on the Philosophy of Jewish History," followed Graetz in accepting a purely spiritual view of Jewish history. But Dubnow disowned this essay (this is found in the volume under review) as a work of youthful immaturity and proceeded to formulate what he called a "sociological view of Jewish history." It was Dubnow more than any other single Jewish historian who stimulated the study of the social and economic history of the Jews in Eastern Europe. When he argued that the Jewish people was the creator of its own history, he was merely taking issue with the assimilationist trends in Jewish scholarship which refused to admit of any independent creative forces within the Jewish community itself. Dubnow called his great synthesis of Jewish history a *Weltgeschichte* because he recognized that Jewish history can be understood only in terms of an interaction between the internal forces of Jewish creative energy and world history.

The prime illustration that Professor Handlin cites of Dubnow's "parochialism" is that of Hasidism. Hasidism, writes Professor Handlin, is treated by Dubnow "as an entirely ingrown Jewish phenomenon, hardly aware of the fact that similar pietistic movements transformed many Christian denominations throughout Europe in the same century." This stricture illustrates a common and serious pitfall of all who deal lightly with "causality" and "influence" in history. It so happens that this writer began his professional career with a volume on German Pietism. My interest in Pietism was in part stimulated by analogical similarities with Hasidism. Ever since 1929 I have been on the lookout for any contact, influence, or causal connection between pietistic and evangelical Christianity and Hasidism. There is thus far not a shred of evidence to point to any historical connection between the two. It

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is one of those interesting but purely accidental coincidences in history, unless you subscribe either to a metaphysical theory of *zeitgeist* or to an astrological philosophy of history. . . . Moreover, had there been any connection, then Hasidism should have started among the Jews of Alsace or Bohemia, where pietistic groups were active, and not in Wallachia, the Ukraine, and White Russia, where such Christian evangelical currents did not develop. Imagination is a most valuable asset to the historian but only if it leads to greater historical accuracy and is tested by the rigors of historical evidence.

3. Dubnow is criticized by Professor Handlin for not understanding "that Jewish nationalism was an aspect of a more general reordering of 19th-century European life" and that "it did not occur to him to wonder why similar movements at the same time should have aroused the enthusiasm of Armenians and Albanians, of Finns and Serbs, and a host of other peoples." It may be true that Dubnow makes no specific references to the Albanians, but no one followed more carefully and more soberly the various nationalist movements of the 19th and 20th centuries than did Dubnow, and his *Letters on Old and New Judaism* (especially if one bothers to look at the footnotes) indicate a thorough familiarity with the entire range of the literature of nationalism, from Renan and Lavrov to the Austro-Marxists. Of course, Dubnow did not "wonder" about the non-Jewish national movements. He *knew* all about them. What he did *wonder* was why Jewish intellectuals who were willing to lend their support to the national aspirations of Albanians and Armenians, Finns and Serbs, and a host of other peoples, were not willing to recognize the claims of the Jews to national autonomy.

4. Finally, Professor Handlin conveys the impression that Dubnow's concept of a multinational state is merely a projection of his own "peculiar community" and that this conception is now outdated and outmoded. Now one may agree or disagree with this conception of Dubnow's, but if Dubnow's opposition to the identification of the political state with cultural nationality is outmoded then so are all schemes for European integration, regional federalism, and all other proposals put forth by leading "Western" political scientists and statesmen who realize, as did Dubnow, that the monolithic national state is only a transitional stage toward larger units which will be multinational and which will have to combine national autonomy with political federalism.

I should not like to leave the impression that Dubnow is above criticism, either as a historian or as a social philosopher. There are serious grounds for taking issue with him in his scheme of periodization, in what some consider an over-rationalist approach to mysticism and Hasidism, in his underestimation of the religious factor in Jewish history, in his very fundamental concept of Jewish nationhood, in his perhaps too extreme evolutionary and historical optimism, and other real and basic problems of Jewish historiography. Of these, perhaps, Mr. Handlin seems to be unaware. In any case they are not the issues raised by him in his review. . . .

KOPPEL S. PINSON

Queens College
Flushing, New York

MR. HANDLIN *writes*:

I confess that Professor Pinson's tirade makes no sense to me. Your readers would not guess from it that my comments on Dubnow were on the whole appreciative, even laudatory. Let me briefly clarify the points Professor Pinson befogs.

1. Dubnow wrote in a period which saw noteworthy achievements in economics, political science, anthropology, social psychology, and sociology. I think that Dubnow lacked adequate contact with those ideas. Professor Pinson will not convince me that I am wrong by throwing at me a miscellaneous agglomeration of names from Sputnik to Sorokin. He could have done so by citing, as he did not, an actual instance in which Dubnow did handle the concepts of that social science.

2. When similar phenomena crop up at the same time in a number of societies, the historian of one of those societies must, at least, be aware of the fact. He may account for the parallelism in a number of ways: it may be the product of actual contact; or it may be the result of the fact that similar conditions in different places, spontaneously and without causal connection, produced similar results; or it may arise from pure coincidence. Dubnow did not even show an awareness of the problem in dealing with Hasidism.

3. Nor did he show such an awareness in dealing with the problem of nationalism. If I am in error in this judgment, I would again be grateful for a specific reference to a passage in which Dubnow considered the possibility that Jewish and non-Jewish nationalism might be the product of the same forces.

4. There may be "leading 'Western' political scientists and statesmen" who still espouse the conception of non-territorial culturally autonomous nationalism; I don't know them and Professor Pinson does not name them. Federalism is, of course, quite another matter; for it

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assumes—what Dubnow always rejected—that the federated areas would each be culturally homogeneous.

Professor Pinson's final paragraph convinces me that it is I rather than he who have the better understanding of Dubnow's genuine achievements. Still, I do not ascribe my antagonist's errors either to ignorance, to malice, or to a pact with the devil—only to defects in logic, which I trust are remediable.

OSCAR HANDLIN

Cambridge, Mass.

Anxiety & the Army

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

"Life in the U.S. Army" (Harris Dienstfrey, September), in its beginnings, when first the recruit reports, and through basic training, is an experience marked by apprehension a great deal of which is caused by ignorance. The recruit does not know the significance of the pre-training tests. The trainee doesn't know the training schedule. He has ideas of basic training gotten from misinformation and movies. Should he or should he not go on sick call? Does anyone die in the gas indoctrination chamber? Will he survive the infiltration course? The most grueling part of training is not the march, or harassment, but anxiety due to the fear of the unknown. What happens next to him?

The interesting thing is that all this information is available. What reserve outfit he might choose before he is sworn in; what the training schedule is and what he might expect in each of the eight weeks; what he can get and do with a minimum of harassment and what is better not to touch; how he can dress in Class A's, go to Friday services, and still retain the respect and friendship of the sergeant and, as important, his peers who are up to their ankles in soap suds at a GI party (Passover-type cleaning).

To mitigate anxiety by getting lowdown information in advance is not the central purpose of other orientations, nor that of pre-induction orientation. But in this case it is an enormously valuable side product. The Jewish Welfare Board does some work along this line. There is some literature. A prospective inductee who does not know where to turn to locally should write to JWB, 145 East 32nd Street, New York 16, New York.

Mr. Dienstfrey's observation that soldiers feel ideologically separated from the civilians outside is not to be denied. Busy as they are collecting information about the great unknown inside, they have no interest left to communicate with outside. They are obsessed with problems of personal safety and possible preferment. But this is not unusual in an atomized society under authoritarianism.

I find an analogous situation—somewhat strained—in my memory of college classrooms. Here, too, the frame of reference to which the realm of ideas was adapted was of its own kind—its terms, its definitions, its descriptions, however scholarly, artificial; where questions put in language commonly used "outside" had no relevance. Even in the social studies where it might be expected there would be the easiest sort of relationship between newspapers and classroom discussions, the disciplines had their neat categories and specialized idiom. As we learned to handle them with expertness, we found it less comfortable to slip into the jargon of "outside." Directors and counselors of summer camps who are sometimes overwhelmed by the flood of work contained between opening and closing will know what I mean. Korean war prisoners and concentration camp prisoners report the same *abteilung* at another degree.

SAMUEL GORDON

Area Director USO
Jewish Welfare Board
Louisville, Kentucky

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* *is* about soldiers and not, as I wrote in my article (September) about marines. In a recent letter to the New York *Post* recounting another incident in which someone mistook his soldiers for marines, Mailer said that he "loved the book very much," and I surely meant no insult to the novel or to Mailer.

I made a more important error, however, when I suggested that *The Naked and the Dead* had nothing to say about the peacetime army. It's true that good men are not crushed as Mailer argues they are in wartime. But the last scene of the novel—a Major is happy that the campaign is over because he can start having inspections again—is the most profound expression I've ever read of the fantasy that pervades army life.

HARRIS DIENSTFREY

Fort Lee, Virginia

"The Good Samaritan"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have just finished reading, with great interest, Stanley Edgar Hyman's article in the September issue on "Oxford's New Theological Dictionary." One very minor statement in the article, quite irrelevant to its major point, has made my hackles rise, and prompted this letter.

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This is the author's impression that the parable of the Good Samaritan in the New Testament is "an anti-Semitic anecdote."

Now, in the first place, I do not think that Jesus was given to telling anti-Semitic stories: he himself was a Jew, and a devout one, albeit, from what we can discern from the Gospels, a man of liberal persuasions, rather at odds with the traditionalists and conservatives of his day.

In the second place, what does the story really say? That a man's being learned and orthodox and observant of ritual (the priest and the Levite of the story) does not necessarily make him a charitable human being. And conversely, that being a foreigner, an infidel, a man of small repute, does not prevent a man from being capable of performing an act of mercy, which in its one performance is more pleasing in the eyes of God than a lifetime of perfunctory ritualistic observance.

I find it fascinating to read the New Testament, separating the reportorial writing from the interpretations, the magnifying glorifications, and the legendary material which seems to have been inserted by the authors, eager to make a point. It is one of my favorite pieces of reading, and I have come to the conclusion that Jesus, if he were to appear today, would be not only a model man but a model Jewish man, both in his personal and in his public life, whatever form the latter might take in the modern world.

What the Christian Churches have made of the same piece of literature is something else again . . . I leave commentary on this to those better qualified. To me at least, there is considerable schism between what the Jesus of the Gospels had to say, and what the Christian Churches, through the ages, have taught in his name. I, personally, think he would be appalled!

BARBARA STEELE

Boston, Massachusetts

MR. HYMAN *writes*:

I am sorry to have displeased Miss Steele by my statement that the parable of the Good Samaritan is "an anti-Semitic anecdote." "I do not think," she writes, "that Jesus was given to telling anti-Semitic stories." The point at issue is not what Jesus said (to which we do not seem to have access), but what the Gospel According to St. Luke says he said (the other three Gospels never mention the parable). Nor is the story of the Good Samaritan the only material in Luke's Gospel of anti-Semitic tendency, and it is significant that whereas in Matthew and Mark the Romans crucify Jesus, in Luke (and John) it is the Jews who crucify him. Had the Lucan writer wanted to suggest only the moral Miss Steele abstracts from his story, the general affirmation of charity and mercy over orthodoxy and ritual observance, he could have made the merciful man not "a certain Samaritan" but a common Jew, a group to whom the acts of human charity were perhaps not unknown even then. He could certainly have made it clear, as he certainly would have known, that the priest and the Levite of his story were forbidden by their occupational taboos from touching the dead or dying, rather than deliberately creating the impression that as representative types of the Jewish clergy they were indifferent or heartless.

STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN

North Bennington, Vermont

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Eisenhower Story

EISENHOWER: CAPTIVE HERO. By MARQUIS CHILDS. Harcourt, Brace. 300 pp. $4.75.

Reviewed by WILLIAM V. SHANNON

CYCLICAL shifts in power have been a permanent feature of political life in the English-speaking democracies throughout their history. No party in Britain has won a general election three times running in the last two hundred years; Canada recently deposed the Liberals after twenty-two years in office and resuscitated the seemingly dead Conservative party; while here in the United States two decades of uninterrupted Democratic rule prepared the way by 1952 for a comparable major shift in political fortunes.

If there had been no Korean war, a change would still have been almost inevitable. It was made doubly sure when the Republican party moved outside the circle of available civilian politicians to nominate General Eisenhower, a popular hero. In *Eisenhower: Captive Hero,* Marquis Childs amply demonstrates that this decision was a misfortune for the Republican party and for the country. For Eisenhower, despite his adaptability and despite certain political talents (such as an excellent sense of timing and a feeling for the mood of an occasion), was fundamentally miscast for the double role of civilian chief executive and national party leader. Above all, his character was ill-suited to his new role. "His temperament, it is fairly clear, is a passive one. The outward geniality, the eager good will, conceal a caution that has made it excessively difficult for him to make decisions. He is moved by forces; he does not undertake to move them himself," Childs writes, and certainly most Washington observers would agree.

Added to this natural passivity are the caution and complacency of a man with a reputation to protect, rather than the zest of a leader with a reputation yet to win. Further, there was the narrowness of his experience. The thirty years of parochial army life he spent from his days as a West Point student in 1911 to his leap from obscurity as a colonel in 1941, deprived him of vital personal knowledge. The boom of the 20's, the harrowing depression of the 30's, and the widely shared revolution in political outlook and social philosophy of the past quarter century, are outside his experience. He stepped into political life straight from the innocent lost world of Abilene, Kansas, a half century ago. Is it any wonder that he told a friend in 1948 the public man whose views he most admired was Senator Byrd?

This lack of preparation was a crucial disability. If Eisenhower had served with Willkie in the political struggle of 1940-44 against the "America Firsters," he would have had a much clearer understanding of McCarthy, Jenner, and his other latter-day enemies in the GOP. Or if, like Thomas Dewey, he had served as governor of a major industrial state, he would not have found it possible to cling to his outmoded views on the government's responsibility in housing, education, and other social welfare fields. There is irony here for those liberal Republicans who in nominating him unwittingly delivered the party leadership into the hands of a man who shared many of the convictions of their enemies in the Taft faction. Eisenhower, it is now plain, has espoused the doctrine of "modern Republicanism" with little success because in domestic affairs he shares the conservative views of Senators Bricker and Capehart, rather than the genuinely modern outlook of men like John Sherman Cooper. "Modern Republicanism" did not need the services of an Arthur Larson; what it needed was a president who was a modern Republican.

THE 1952 election was an opportunity to put in the White House a party leader who would confirm and consolidate the repeated intra-party victories which liberal Republicans had won in national conventions during the pre-

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ceding twenty years. Mr. Eisenhower was perfectly willing to delegate the patronage and political influence of the Presidency to a small directorate of liberal Republican politicians headed by ex-Governor Dewey. But without the active, informed leadership of the President himself, patronage has been a dubious benefit for the cause of liberal Republicanism. It is an anomaly that although this faction controls the jobs, after six years its more conservative opponents are still entrenched in the party and Congressional hierarchies and can assert their proprietary claim to the "authentic" Republican tradition. Eisenhower has not clarified and confirmed a more liberal image of the Republican party; it could indeed be argued that his tenure in office has weakened rather than strengthened progressive tendencies within the party. The result of the unresolved ambiguity in the President's relation to the majority of his own political following is the party's demoralization and sense of leaderlessness described by Harold Lavine in the August COMMENTARY.

If Eisenhower has failed to remake his party, or to validate in domestic affairs the premises of the new socially minded conservatism his nomination heralded only a half-dozen years ago, what of his far more spectacular and consequential failures in national defense and foreign affairs? Here lie the decisive tests of any administration. A misadventure like the blind alley of the Dixon-Yates project, or a regressive stand like the President's obdurate hostility to public housing, might have been forecast in 1952, but the failure to anticipate "Sputnik" and the inner rotting of the Atlantic Alliance are disasters no observer would have expected. Here Childs is particularly illuminating. He makes it unmistakably clear that Eisenhower was from the beginning unequal to the heavy burdens of foreign and defense policy-making. To master the implications of the new military technology, to keep apace of the unceasing flow of foreign developments, these were tasks always beyond his natural capacity. He lacked the energy, the imagination, and the intellectual powers to cope with the huge presidential burden. He had never been at ease as an administrator.

In 1947, he was writing to General Bedell Smith complaining of the irksome chores and political complexities of the office of Chief of Staff, and later, as president of Columbia University, he chafed at administrative routine and was often inaccessible to his department heads. He does not like to read, and Childs reports that John Foster Dulles, after a visit to SHAPE in 1952, "grumbled privately on his return that the General did not do his homework." Before entering the White House, he had never been the originator of high policy; both during World War II and again as NATO chief in 1951-52, he carried out policy decided by others. He had always been, in Childs's phrase, "the military manager, the front-office man, for whom the title of commander was something of an anachronism; the end result of the managerial revolution in the military." Eisenhower's strengths have been his plasticity, his charm, his skill at man-to-man diplomacy. A diplomat's flair and an old soldier's narrow expertise have been unequal to the work of the White House. He has coped with his burdens by delegating them to others. To write of this administration's foreign policy is to write of Dulles, not Eisenhower, because the President, except for some eleventh-hour interventions, has played little active part.

CHILDS's contribution in *Eisenhower: Captive Hero* is his success in making recent history understandable in terms of Eisenhower's character and circumstances. He has not written a detailed history of the Eisenhower administration, but he has captured its mood and style in this portrait of a president. Eisenhower's political role has had some baffling aspects. He has had enormous political successes rivaling those of Roosevelt, but with nothing like a comparable core of achievement in office to account for them. The public seemed to be judging him by criteria other than the customary political standards. Childs's theme of the "captive hero" helps explain this supra-political phenomenon:

"Foremost among the prizes brought home by victorious armies in the ancient past were living symbols of triumph, a captive prince or king whose existence among the victors insured the peace and the well-being that must go with peace. Something of this same hope was invested in Eisenhower. He was our captive hero. . . . He was our hostage against ill fortune, our warranty that all would be well. Whether he lent himself to this role willingly or only after long doubt and earnest persuasion was irrelevant—just as the real nature of the man and his equipment, or lack of it, for the highest office were also irrelevant."

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By developing Eisenhower's career from boyhood to the present around the theme—how does a man become a hero?—Childs makes it possible for us to see the Eisenhower career from plebe to President in its essential psychological unity and to comprehend how so great and golden an illusion could have gathered around this amiable ordinary man. Childs has thus presented the most coherent and persuasive picture of the President we have yet received. He has the true gift of the biographer: he makes his subject come alive. Writing with sympathy and yet with detachment, he displays psychological insight, and his style is lucid, fluent, and notably graceful. If quality journalism is a first draft of history, future historians will find that Marquis Childs has written a first draft of the Eisenhower story that will be permanently useful.

The Stature of Martin Buber

HASIDISM AND MODERN MAN. By MARTIN BUBER. Edited and translated by Maurice Friedman. Horizon Press. 256 pp. $4.00.

POINTING THE WAY: COLLECTED ESSAYS. By MARTIN BUBER. Translated and edited by Maurice Friedman. Harper. 239 pp. $4.50.

TO HALLOW THIS LIFE. By MARTIN BUBER. An Anthology, edited with an introduction by Jacob Trapp. Harper. 174 pp. $3.00.

MOSES: THE REVELATION AND THE COVENANT. By MARTIN BUBER. Harper Torchbooks. 226 pp. $1.25.

MARTIN BUBER. By ARTHUR A. COHEN. Hillary House. 110 pp. $2.00.

Reviewed by WALTER KAUFMANN

BUBER'S rather sudden, and still growing, popularity in the United States coincides with the religious revival after World War II, which is variously appraised either as a hopeful development or as a failure of nerve. Buber's own thought owes nothing to this revival. Born in 1878, he was thirty-six when the First World War broke out; and about the time when the above five volumes appeared, he was celebrating his eightieth birthday.

After World War I, Buber became one of the outstanding religious writers in Germany. His little book, *Ich und Du* (published in the same year as Freud's *Das Ich und das Es,* 1923), exerted an enormous influence on Protestant theology; his German translation of the Hebrew Bible, begun jointly with Franz Rosenzweig (a few books still remain to be translated), was widely appreciated as a major contribution to German literature; and his collections of the tales of the Hasidim were soon hailed as world literature. In the 30's, under the stress of religious persecution, large numbers of men and women and young people read and listened to Buber with eager hearts and minds, and with an intensity compared with which the current American vogue of religion seems relatively shallow. The difference at issue here is one that is emphasized throughout the Hebrew Bible: that between the religion of the prosperous and the religion of the oppressed. Religion at its most profound has never been experienced by more than a few, except under the scourge of persecution. Martin Buber has been one of the few.

At the end of World War II, only one of his books had been translated into English, *I and Thou* (1937); by now, there are more than two dozen, including several paperbacks. More and more volumes of introductory readings in philosophy include selections from his writings. Maurice Friedman's 300-page study of *Martin Buber* (1955) has gone into a second printing. In Erich Heller's series of very short "Studies in Modern European Literature and Thought," until now published by the Yale University Press, a volume on *Martin Buber* (1957) by Arthur A. Cohen has been brought out by Hillary House. Another, longer, study by Malcolm Diamond has been promised by the Oxford University Press. And the Library of Living Philosophers (Tudor) will shortly bring out a volume on Buber, containing two dozen critical essays by different hands and an intellectual autobiography and a reply to his critics by Buber himself.

In all this literature there is probably no better introduction to Buber than an extremely short piece that could easily be printed on twenty pages: his own *The Way of Man According to the Teachings of Hasidism* (1948). It is reprinted in *Hasidism and Modern Man,* together with five other pieces which range in time from 1908 to 1957. These include the autobiographical essay "My Way to Hasidism"

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(1918) and several of Buber's by now classical interpretations. Another volume of Buber's Hasidic essays is to follow before long. This scheme has one obvious disadvantage: the material in the present volume could easily have been presented on barely over one hundred pages, and the present price may deprive it of its rightful audience. Buber's wonderful *Tales of the Hasidim* were also published in two volumes (by Schocken) and have never reached the audience they deserve, while the original German *Erzählungen der Chassidim* are available in a single, pocket-sized, cheap but beautifully produced, volume in the Manesse Bibliothek der Weltliteratur.

Anyway, there is no better approach to Buber than to read *The Way of Man According to the Teachings of Hasidism.* After a very short introduction, Buber tells six very short Hasidic tales, following up each with some reflections of his own. The six sections are entitled "Heart-searching," "The particular way," "Resolution," "Beginning with oneself," "Not to be preoccupied with oneself," and "Here where one stands." Maurice Friedman is entirely right when he says in his introduction to *Hasidism and Modern Man* that what Buber offers in these six sections "is far more than a mere interpretation or summary of Hasidic teaching. No other of Buber's works gives us so much of his own simple wisdom as this remarkable distillation." The name of the translator, who deserves our gratitude, is not given. All the other essays in the volume were translated by Friedman.

POINTING THE WAY is in the main a translation of Buber's *Hinweise,* published by the Manesse Verlag in 1953. Of the twenty-nine essays in the English volume, twenty-one come from *Hinweise,* though this is not mentioned. For a few essays a source is given, for most of them, including several that do not come from *Hinweise,* no source is listed. Another slight editorial oversight: of many footnotes it is not clear whether they were written by Buber or by Friedman. But at least every title is followed by a year, and Buber himself, in a brief foreword, calls attention to the fact that these essays span the period from 1909 to 1954. In contents they range from "Productivity and Existence" and "Franz Rosenzweig" to "A Letter to Gandhi" and Buber's address on the occasion of his acceptance of the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade in 1953. The arrangement, not being chronological, is not especially helpful, and the translations, although faithful and conscientious as everything Friedman does, quite lack the brilliance of style which distinguishes Buber's German. It is very good indeed to have these essays available in English, but they are not likely to appeal, as the originals do, to people with no special interest in Buber.

To Hallow This Life is an anthology of short passages from Buber's writings, edited by Jacob Trapp, minister of the Community Church in Summit, New Jersey. The trouble with most anthologies is that they remain at the surface and leave the reader in ignorance of the meaning and dimension which only the context and a more sustained effort can supply. Jacob Trapp's anthology is based on an exceptionally deep understanding of Buber's thought, as the well-chosen title suggests immediately, and readers who know Buber well no less than those eager to get to know him should love and treasure this admirable book. An eight-page index makes it a helpful reference work, too. Page references are given after every passage—and it is to be hoped that most readers will not stop until they have also read some of the books from which these wonderful selections come. His *Moses,* for example.

Buber's *Moses,* now made available in a cheap but dignified paperback edition, was first published in English in 1946. The name of the translator—indeed, the fact that the book was translated—is not mentioned in either edition, although Buber himself wrote only the Hebrew and the German versions. This book represents one of his major efforts. Any adequate discussion of it would have to include some analysis of the Higher Criticism of the Bible (with which Buber, rightly, finds fault) and of Buber's own procedure, which has been criticized as excessively intuitive and inspirational. It must suffice here to give some brief idea of the significance of the book. Buber aims at "the description of Moses as a concrete individuality and the demonstration of what he created and what his historical work was." And he adds: "To the best of my knowledge, what has been essayed here is the first comprehensive attempt of this kind." One need hardly add that the book eminently deserves wide reading and discussion.

A century of Higher Criticism has won wide currency for a view which does not brook close scrutiny: that the Hebrew prophets were merely precursors of Jesus (as if Jesus had not aban-

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doned their most distinctive concern with social justice) and that Moses was at best an early, morally not very interesting, forerunner of the prophets. As a result, few today would quarrel with Karl Jaspers when, in the first of three huge tomes on *Die grossen Philosophen*, he recognizes only four *massgebende Menschen*—Socrates, Buddha, Confucius, and Jesus—explaining: "One could hardly mention a fifth of equal historical power, not one who still addresses us today from the same height." Even those who prefer the ethics of the prophets to the moral teachings of any of these four—even those who feel that the moral level of the Book of Jonah compares favorably with any one of the Gospels taken as a whole—may still admit that not one of the prophets, not even Jeremiah (who comes to life as an individual rather more than any of the others) confronts us as a personality "of equal historical power." But Moses certainly does, and whatever one may think of the details of Buber's presentation, it is one of the many great merits of his book that it directs the attention of the modern world to the individuality and achievements of Moses.

If critical doubts about the historical Moses were far better justified than they probably are, that still would not settle the case against Moses: after all, critical doubts about the historical Buddha, Socrates, and Jesus are legion. At least for a start, the Moses of the Torah demands to be considered alongside the Jesus of the Gospels, the Socrates of the early Platonic dialogues, the Buddha of the Pali canon, and the Confucius of the Analects. He need not fear the comparison. Consider the titanic image of the man whom the Bible pictures—the man who hurled into history what was perhaps the most revolutionary challenge of all time: "You shall be holy!" He called on a whole people to rise above their inherited state and to raise themselves to a higher level here and now, in this life. He taught that man as such is made in God's image, called upon to become holy like his Creator, and that no man, no priest, no king, and certainly no image, merits worship. Unlike the Buddha and Confucius—and not only they—he impressed his followers with this idea so successfully that he himself was never deified or worshipped. The image he created of himself was that of a human being, wearing himself out in the service of God and men: patient, hard to anger, magnificent in his wrath, completely unresentful, capable of the deepest suffering, the quintessence of devotion. When he went away to die alone, he might have left his people with the belief that he was flawless and immortal and had gone back to heaven once his mission was accomplished. Instead, they understood that no man was to know his grave lest one might worship there, or attach any value whatsoever to his mortal body. Having seen Egypt, Moses knew better than the Buddha—and not only the Buddha—how prone men are to such superstitions. To the end, Moses created an image of humanity: he left his people with the thought that, being human and imperfect, he could not enter the promised land but went up on a mountain to see the land before he died.

This is not quite the picture Buber draws in his book, which is infinitely more detailed and full of references to the scholarly literature of the past hundred years, without being at all "academic" in the bad sense. Of course, Buber has to deal with the question of Moses' relation to the minutiae of the ritual law. According to the Bible, Moses was concerned with these matters, but they never diminished his pervasive and abiding concern with his sublime conception of God and its moral implications. The Higher Criticism, deviating from the Bible, claimed that the ritual, not the moral, concern characterized the historical Moses. Buber, like Alt and Albright—and some of the prophets, whose testimony certainly should not be ignored as it usually is—takes more nearly the opposite view. If this view should be correct, as I think it is, Moses' stature and challenge at least equal those of any other man of any age.

Buber's significance is inseparable from his misgivings about theology and from his central concern with the realities of the religious life, especially among the Hasidim and in the Bible. It is in this perspective that his *Moses* should be read. And the paperback series of Harper Torchbooks, long deserving of the gratitude of all who are concerned with religion or philosophy, has become still more eminent by adding Buber's *Moses* to its list.

ARTHUR A. COHEN, the director of Meridian Books which publishes several series of quality paperbacks, comes to Buber by way of his own concern with Jewish theology. The resulting criticism of Buber might have supplemented Friedman's more comprehensive study which offers no criticism at all. But Cohen never gets

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around to presenting any criticism of which it could be said that Buber's admirers will have to take account. There are a great many very good things in Cohen's little monograph, but he tries to do too much, and his essay reads rather like a draft for a potentially fine book.

Immediately on the first page, one is quite needlessly put off: "Moses [*sic*] casts the foreskin into the face [*sic*] of the angel of heaven [*sic*]; . . . Uriah [*sic*] dies when he touches the ark." Such allusions, of doubtful help in a brief work (they are introduced to illustrate the nature of the holy, as conceived by Rudolf Otto, not by Buber) become a positive hindrance when they are inaccurate. Other obstacles include phrases like "spoken forth as the supernal subject of man's subject" (on the next page); Latin words and phrases, also sometimes inaccurate, in places where one or two English words would be much clearer (e.g., *"Fascinosans," "per definens,"* "There are *sine qua non* without which . . ."); names that are not spelled right (Heidigger, Hoffmansthal, Schoelem); and a profusion of sentences that are not quite grammatical and, as a result, unclear and ambiguous. Yet Cohen criticizes Buber's style—among other things for being "ambiguous."

It is not only such trivia that distract from the central difference between Buber and his critic. The criticisms themselves are widely scattered and put forward in a way that is more irritating than convincing. No sooner is Buber introduced, after that stark discussion of the holy, than Cohen says: "I do not think he would object to being called, with considerable qualification, a holy fool." And the final charge against Buber, at the end of the book, is this: "the tragedy of failure, however acknowledged, is not truly believed as Isaiah believed it. It is not truly believed because, unlike the faith of Isaiah, I am not convinced that Buber ascribes to God power equal to his mercy. . . . God weeps over creation (as indeed he does). . . . All is endless exhortation, patience, trust, and compassion." And then Cohen recalls us to God's judgment.

There is no point, of course, in contending with a critic who has the kind of inside information which Cohen divulges in parentheses; but the pity is that in the midst of all this unholy foolishness the truly distinctive marks of Buber's thought and Cohen's at least potentially interesting protest against them get all but lost. The issue between Buber's whole approach to the religious life on the one hand and the more theological concern fashionable today on the other is of sufficient importance to merit detailed discussion, and Cohen might have made an important contribution by developing it from a theological point of view. But there is still some hope, and some reason for believing, that he may do this in another volume.

In his book on Buber, Cohen mentions only in passing that "Unlike the writing of Guardini or Maritain, Barth or Brunner, or even that of Franz Rosenzweig and the late Chief Rabbi Kook, Buber's religious position presupposes no dogmatics." Then, two lines later, we are derailed by the *sine qua non,* already cited. Much later, we are informed that "Buber is not a philosopher, but an anthropologist." Even those who might sympathize with the first half of that statement are not likely to accept the second. And seventy pages earlier, in a footnote, Cohen says: "I would count Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929) as the most profound and authentic Jewish philosopher and theologian of modern times."

If acceptance of the Halachah, with all the minutiae of the ritual law, is the criterion of who is, and who is not, authentically Jewish, Buber is obviously not, while the later Rosenzweig was. But that obviously does not settle either the question of Buber's profundity or the question whether his concern with the realities of the religious life is not possibly more in keeping with the distinctive genius of Judaism than Rosenzweig's, or anybody else's, theology. Any praise at the expense of Rosenzweig would certainly be unwelcome to Buber; but the difference between the two men is illuminating. First, to mention a small point, Rosenzweig was an extremely acid and witty polemicist. While Buber would tend to pass over in silence any criticism that is at all personal, forbearing also to comment on a critic's style, Latin, or scholarship, anyone familiar with Rosenzweig's published replies to Buber's critics and his own will surely agree that his comments on Cohen's book would probably not have been marked by endless "patience, trust, and compassion."

This, of course, is not the crucial difference between him and Buber. Rosenzweig, like other existentialists and dialectical theologians, was steeped in German Idealism. He devoted a fine two-volume study to Hegel; and, in line with that Hegelianism which, unlike Hegel himself, thinks in terms of thesis, antithesis,

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and synthesis, Rosenzweig placed on the title pages of the three parts of his philosophic main work, *Der Stern der Erlösung*, the three symbols of the triangle, the inverted triangle, and the Star of David. He rediscovered Judaism more or less as Maritain and Barth rediscovered Catholicism and Protestantism, i.e. from the vantage point of secular philosophy. His rediscovery took many forms: it may suffice here to refer to his translations of Judah Halevy and his heroic decision to join with Buber in translating the Bible, at a time when he was already all but completely paralyzed. But he also tried to match the endeavors of his Christian contemporaries by developing a philosophical theology from a Jewish point of view.

Theology is highly problematic in a number of ways, of which only one need be mentioned here. Theologians try to meet the latest intellectual challenges: Neoplatonism or Aristotelianism or, in more recent times, romanticism (Schleiermacher) or liberalism (Harnack) or, in our time, idealism and Marxism, psychoanalysis and, above all, existentialism. Almost invariably, the theologians come after the great original thinkers and try to show how their own denomination can absorb the latest fashions of thought. Jewish religious thinkers who choose the task of emulating, and at the same time meeting the challenge of, Christian apologists reduce themselves to the thankless task of writing third-hand tracts that are not likely to have much lasting importance. Even Harnack and Schleiermacher, who were outstanding scholars besides being theologians, are not widely remembered, except among academics; a mere fifty or a hundred years after their deaths. How much less so writers who tried to emulate and at the same time answer them! Jewish religious writers can surely raise more interesting and important problems by questioning the presuppositions of theology and the status of beliefs in religion.

Perhaps more than anybody else in the first half of our century, Buber is "pointing the way" to a non-Hegelian, non-Greek, Biblical religion. Instead of copying the theologians, he has given them a great deal to think about. With his work on the Hasidim and the Bible he has above all reminded us how genuine religion is not a matter of doctrines, concepts, and theologies. No greater praise can be bestowed on him than by saying that, like few men in any age, Martin Buber has pointed a way to the prophets and to Moses.

Magic and Morality

THE MAGIC BARREL. By BERNARD MALAMUD. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy. 214 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by DAN JACOBSON

IN THIS new volume by Mr. Malamud, there are thirteen stories, most of them set in the dingiest streets of a city which—whether it is named or not—one can assume always to be New York; in addition there are three longish stories set in Italy. The people in Mr. Malamud's New York streets are for the most part immigrant Jews, or Italians, and are invariably poor; his travelers in Italy are lonely and wistful, though a little richer. Both the people who live in New York, and those who venture back to Europe, are anxious for spiritual growth, which comes to them painfully and tardily, and only after they have earned it by faith and generosity; sometimes the growth does not come at all, because they have been false to themselves, or because the struggle has exhausted them beyond endurance. A cobbler accepts a poor employee as a suitor for his daughter, "and though it was an icy night and the crisp falling snow whitened the street, he walked with a stronger stride"; a landlord comes to evict an obstinate and objectionable tenant, but instead "suffer(s) unbearable remorse for the way he had treated the old man," and sinks to the floor, mourning; a young American Jew seeking romance and truth in Italy loses a beautiful girl because he denies that he is Jewish—hopelessly, he has called himself "Freeman" instead of by his true name, Levine. The stories are all moral fables of the most serious kind; and there is hardly one that is not also extremely funny.

To tell these fables, Mr. Malamud has developed a prose style with a deceptively artless movement to it. "Thereafter Manischevitz was victimized by excruciating backaches and found himself unable to work even as a presser —the only kind of work available to him—because beyond that the pain from standing became maddening. His Fanny, a good wife and mother, who had taken in washing and sewing, began before his eyes to waste away." I think that this is a fair small example of Mr. Malamud's narrative style: it is written with what seems like a total disregard for considerations of euphony, a kind of surface clumsiness that

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the Yiddish inflection of his language in the "Jewish" stories does not altogether account for, and that one might imagine would become wearying when read over a long period. In fact, it does nothing of the kind. Mr. Malamud's people may seem to approach us guilelessly, and the language in which we are told about them may seem to have no pretensions; but we soon find out that in the world of simple people with simple problems that he has created, nothing is simple.

"Angel Levine," for example—from which I have quoted the passage about Manischevitz—is a modern morality about faith and charity; but to demonstrate what faith and charity might demand, Mr. Malamud uses a hard and grotesque irony of situation, and a kind of humor that can best be described as implacable. Manischevitz, who has to force himself to believe that a seedy, unreliable, and unprepossessing Negro can be an angel of God ("There are Jews everywhere," Manischevitz exclaims, when he is convinced at last) prays to God: "Give Fanny back her health, and to me for myself that I shouldn't feel pain in every step I take. Help now, or tomorrow is too late. This I don't have to tell you." In his communion with God, Manischevitz reflects, "Who, after all, was Manischevitz that he had given so much to suffer? A tailor. Certainly not a man of talent. Upon him suffering was largely wasted. It went into nowhere, into nothing: into more suffering. His pain did not earn him bread, nor fill the cracks in the wall, nor lift, in the middle of the night, the kitchen table. . . ." And when Manischevitz makes his statement of faith ("I believe you are an angel from God") to the half-drunken Negro, he says it "in a broken voice, thinking, If you said it it was said. If you believed it you must say it. If you believed it, you believed it."

Inevitably, a reader who is familiar with the cadences of Yiddish speech will have the pleasure of recognition in reading many of these stories; but that pleasure—and it is a considerable one, for Mr. Malamud's ear is wonderfully acute—should not be allowed to distort the reader's perception of what Mr. Malamud is doing. The Yiddish inflections are not there for "color" or "quaintness," but to convey something so precise that it cannot be conveyed in any other way; and the reader who knows nothing of the way immigrant Jews speak should be moved in the right way by the language, if he is careful enough in his reading. For the best of these stories enact fully what they are about, and do not merely recall something else again; Mr. Malamud establishes the meanings of his terms as he uses them—so much so that one is able to say ultimately in praise and not in reproof that to be "a Jew" in Mr. Malamud's conception of the term is to be something that few Jews actually are. His people—Jews and Gentiles alike—are straining to make themselves better; and he has the capacity to do what has baffled and defeated greater writers: the capacity to make goodness of the most humble and long-suffering kind real, immediate, and attractive.

Yet one must go on to say that considering the great gifts that are displayed in the stories—and there is not one which does not bear the evidence of these gifts—fewer of the stories than one might expect are altogether successful. To say this is to seem ungenerous, when one considers how very few writers there are today who can come near to what Mr. Malamud has already achieved; but writing of this kind enforces its own standards of judgment, and has to be criticized on the level of its own successes. And when one tries to analyze the dissatisfaction left by some of the stories, one's first instinct is to divide them crudely into two batches—those which are overtly "fantastic," and deal in one way or another with the supernatural; and those which are more "naturalistic"—and to look for the failures in one batch or the other. But if we do so, we find soon enough that the problem is a more delicate one: there are failures and successes in both batches, just as there is none among the "failures" that does not have its moments of local success. Clearly, in both kinds of stories, Mr. Malamud can force us to recognize him as a true writer, in the way that we do recognize the true writer: by his ability to make us feel as we read that usually, and by choice, we move in a moral twilight of habit, flippancy, and sentimentality, half-blind and half-insensible to the sights of the world.

In Mr. Malamud's case we feel this particularly when we consider the wonderful sureness with which he can reach out and touch directly the emotions of his characters: the nakedness of the impact can be almost too much to bear. And we recognize his power too when we acknowledge that humble and simple though his characters are, they have an aware-

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ness of a kind that is much rarer and subtler and more difficult to communicate than anything that usually goes under the heading of "intelligence." Mr. Malamud's bakers, pressers, egg candlers, "holdupniks," storekeepers and the rest, are *morally* intelligent; they are aware that their actions take place in a real world and have consequences for which they are responsible.

Now when we are faced with this degree of awareness and emotional sensitivity, one of the temptations into which we can most easily fall—and the temptation is particularly acute when we are offered insight as fantasy—is to say that the man who has seen what we have been unable to see is a "visionary," a "magician," a "dreamer." But the truth can be that he is nothing of the kind: that he is merely awake, and we are the dreamers.

Yet our temptation can be the writer's too. Re-reading these stories and *The Assistant,** I have become convinced that Mr. Malamud is a more considerable writer than the kind of praise that has generally been given to his work would lead one to expect. At its best his work is *not* marginal, or dreamlike, confined to an ill-lit and dusty corner of our experience, where anything can happen. But the temptation to see it as such—one sometimes feels—is one that the author himself does not always resist. It is then that the force and the logic of his stories tends to fail—whether the logic is that of his fantasy or that of his "real" world. It is then that we can be given something that is merely gnomic, riddling, anagrammatic in the "fantastic" stories; then that we find in the "naturalistic" stories a kind of unwarranted expectation that the reader will put in abeyance some of the demands he ordinarily makes of fiction.

These are criticisms I would make in different ways of even such fresh and exciting stories as "Angel Levine" or "The Last Mohican" in one category, or of "The Lady of the Lake" in another. And with smaller tales like "A Summer's Reading" or "The Girl of My Dreams" I think one is justified in feeling a certain impatience with their comparative meagerness of intention, considering the company they keep. My own favorites in the collection are "The First Seven Years," "Take Pity," "The Loan," and "The Magic Barrel" itself—though there is not a story in the book that does not help to show us, as *The Assistant* did, where Mr. Malamud's place in contemporary American letters could be. His strengths are of the most important kind; his moral concerns are central to the traditions both of the people from which he comes, and of the language in which he writes.

*I have not re-read *The Natural* as I have been unable to get hold of a copy of the book. It is a fact sadly worth recording that none of Mr. Malamud's works has yet been published in England.

Religious Tensions in "Paper City"

PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC. By KENNETH W. UNDERWOOD. Beacon Press. 484 pp. $7.50.

Reviewed by MARSHALL SKLARE

PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC is a community study which breaks new ground. It does not focus primarily on the power structure, as did the Lynds in the *Middletown* volumes, or on the status system, as Warner did in the *Yankee City* books—its primary concern is with religion, and it attempts to relate other institutional features to this one subject. Underwood's concentration on religion and interreligious relations comes as a refreshing corrective; sociological and anthropological students of modern communities have tended to analyze religion only as it affects what they consider more basic human concerns.

Discussion of interreligious affairs by non-Catholics during recent years has tended to be of two sorts. The first is the Blanshard approach, with its stress on the peril of Catholic power to American freedom. This approach has intimated that Catholic clergymen, although citizens of the United States, are under the domination of a foreign power. The other attitude is represented, among others, by the works of Will Herberg, who has stressed the compatibility of certain Catholic demands with American freedom. He believes that religious tensions are a secondary matter: the primary fact is that the three great faiths are tending to lose their distinctiveness. Americans are indulging in a form of common idolatry—that religion, *qua* religion—any and all religion—is "good." Herberg feels that when Catholics take a strong, distinctive line on certain issues, their demands are symptomatic of a desire for religious authenticity. Protestants and Jews could —with profit—do likewise.

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Both approaches have marshaled facts in their support, but they have been very different sets of facts. Neither school has taken the trouble to test its theories by studying an actual American city which is under strong Catholic influence. It is the merit of Kenneth Underwood's study that he has had the courage to attempt to do just that.

The city Underwood examines in *Protestant and Catholic* is Holyoke, Massachusetts, or "Paper City" as it is sometimes called. A community of some 50,000 souls, Holyoke was founded by Protestants who still hold the key positions in the industrial and commercial hierarchy. But Protestants are no longer the dominant element in the population; they comprise less than 20 per cent of the community. Not only is the majority of the population Catholic, but the author states that Holyoke is a town which ". . . some Roman Catholic leaders [have] called 'the most Catholic city in America,' and in a region which some Protestant ministers [have] termed the 'birth land' of American Protestantism." In short, we should have in Holyoke—with its shift from a predominantly Protestant to a predominantly Catholic community, and with its Protestant elite group and its Catholic working class—a community especially liable to interreligious tensions.

Protestant-Catholic dissension did indeed erupt in Holyoke in the fall of 1940. Margaret Sanger had been invited to lecture on birth control, on the premises of the First Congregational Church. Catholic leaders brought pressure to bear and induced the Congregationalists to cancel their arrangements. The Catholics also made it impossible for Miss Sanger to secure any other suitable location. At the last moment permission was given by the Textile Workers Union to use the office of their Holyoke local. In its cluttered and ramshackle rooms Miss Sanger finally gave her talk.

How could such tactics succeed in Protestant New England? Underwood utilizes the Sanger incident as a point of departure for the examination of a variety of topics: the nature of Protestant and Catholic worship, the spiritual authority of minister and priest, the extent and type of involvement of both churches in politics, the way the two faith groups finance their activities. All of these topics, and many more, he discusses as a Protestant, without, however, allowing his commitment to distort and slant his analysis. The book is notable, in addition to its courage in tackling its subject, for the wealth of facts and interpretations about Protestant-Catholic differences that it contains. Let me give some examples. It is true that the Catholic hierarchy scored a victory over Holyoke's Protestants in the Sanger incident. However, the hierarchy was not able to change an astonishing fact about the community which one finds in the United States Decennial Census: Holyoke—that most Catholic of American cities—has a comparatively low birth rate! In fact, Holyoke's birth rate is not only lower than that for Massachusetts as a whole, but it is under the national birth rate.

Why so? Holyoke is an industrial community. The textile and paper mill owners (incidentally Protestants) have followed a policy of employing as many women as possible. Women were not only willing to work for lower wages than men, but were considered more skilled at certain crucial tasks. Thus, the percentage of the female population gainfully employed in "Paper City" greatly exceeds the national average. These women tend to limit their fertility. Underwood remarks: "Social and economic factors in 'Paper City' operate to reduce the power of religious pressure against the use of artificial means of birth control. This fact no doubt contributed to the concern of some Catholic leaders with population trends in the community expressed in the Sanger incident." We thus begin to view the incident in a wider perspective: we see it as an attempt to modify some of the results of the integration of Catholics into an industrial culture—incidentally a culture founded and still dominated by Protestants.

Let us take another aspect of the problem. An important index to the prosperity of the Church is the pace of conversion. In this very Catholic city, the priests should have far outdistanced the ministers in the success of their conversion efforts. Underwood supplies us with the actual figures; they show that in 1936 there were only 18 converts from Protestantism to Catholicism, in 1946 only 36. But 29 individuals converted *to* Protestantism *from* Roman Catholicism in 1946, an impressive record if one remembers that less than 20 per cent of the city's population is Protestant. And in 1940 the 33 priests converted 36 individuals, while the 14 Protestant ministers converted 29 individuals.

Why has the Catholic Church been so un-

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successful? Underwood does not address himself at length to this problem, but one of the answers is provided by his material on the stratification system of Holyoke. His data indicate that while Catholicism may be powerful in certain institutional areas, most Catholics occupy a rather low position in the status hierarchy. The Catholic Church, of course, operates in a secular culture where social status is of great importance. This serves to give Protestantism an edge—their high-status denominations are relatively more successful in attracting converts. The Catholic victory in the Sanger incident, as well as certain other continuing signs of Protestant weakness, do not imply an exodus from Protestantism. The latter may have deficiencies in the realm of organizational structure and in the extent of lay religiosity, but Protestants as such are not attracted to other faith groups.

If the Catholic Church in Holyoke were successful in its conversion program, might there not be less pressure about birth control? Underwood does not answer this question. However, it is apparent that as support for the Church does not come from alienated Protestants, it can only be won from working-class Catholics. But these Catholics pose a problem to the Church: many of them are eager to climb the social ladder, which is difficult unless they limit their fertility. And so a "private" religious matter becomes the concern of all members of the community, for the general freedom is imperiled when the Church attempts to exert control at this point over its own flock.

Underwood offers various reasons to explain the decline of Protestant power in "Paper City." He presents a cogent analysis of the failure of the ecumenical movement and of the lack of communication between clergyman and layman. He highlights how the economic and social status of the Protestant group, and their business proclivities, operate to impede implementation of their religious values. Good Protestantism and good capitalism no longer go hand in hand, as is apparent from an interview with a prominent Yankee manufacturer. The man told Underwood: "I can argue this Catholic-Protestant business a dozen different ways. I do with my wife regularly. 'What will you accomplish,' I'll say, 'by standing up to the Catholics? You'll not change their view of their Church. You'll just make them more loyal under attack.' Then she'll say that I'm unwilling to defend the religious convictions that have been the basis of this country when I'm in a powerful position to do it. Then I argue that my plant would be vulnerable to economic action by Catholics. But I get to thinking: What would the Church do? Withdraw workers? Even good Catholics won't stay out and starve. But what do I want to make them do a thing like that for? Hell, I don't know where I stand. I'm just interested in maintaining good business relations in the plant, not in promoting righteous causes. My first responsibility is to the plant."

Underwood says the following about Protestant lay people: "They are impressed by the intransigence of the Catholic Church on issues that matter to it and by its majority status. They protest against the irrelevancy of many

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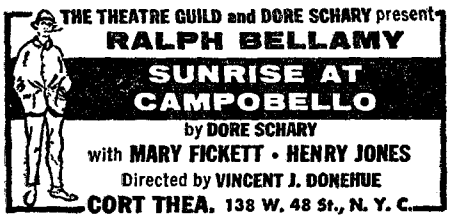
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'church' issues, such as gambling and transportation of parochial students, which excite the ministers; these are not issues which appear crucial in their own lives. They believe they have kept freedom in 'Paper City,' in the areas which matter most—'the chance to run a business profitably,' to 'make a good living,' to practice medicine or law successfully. 'So give the Catholics their transportation and their birth-control laws,' one businessman, a wholesaler of construction supplies, observed; 'these will not change our control of business in the city.'"

The final merit of *Protestant and Catholic* is that it does not hold the type of antiseptic viewpoint which is so characteristic of the work of the academic researcher. Underwood *has* a value system and this leads him to conclude that: "America's 'most Catholic city' has a Protestantism that often acts scared and ineffectual because of the unusually strong position, for America at least, of Catholicism. 'Paper City' has in many ways a comparatively rigid and conservative Catholicism because of the state of Protestantism there. The most healthy society would be achieved where Roman Catholic and Protestant movements were both vitally represented and interacting in candor and mutual trust. This is not possible where either faith movement has become so powerful as to threaten the existence or vitality of the other."

Drama in the 50's

BEST AMERICAN PLAYS, FOURTH SERIES, 1951-1957. Edited by JOHN GASSNER. Crown. 648 pp. $5.75.

Reviewed by GERALD WEALES

THE seventeen plays that John Gassner has chosen for his latest collection of American plays may not be the "best" for the years 1951-1957, but they are at least typical. Except for Eugene O'Neill's *A Moon for the Misbegotten* and Arthur Miller's *The Crucible,* the volume contains only plays which were "hits" on Broadway and which—apart from *Inherit the Wind* and *A View from the Bridge*—became Hollywood movies. Since that is the case, the collection should provide a picture of the dramatic tastes of its period, even if it fails to be much of an aesthetic experience.

There are a few plays included which appear to have little to do with the 50's, but even their success can be traced, in part, to current literary preoccupations. Thornton Wilder's *The Matchmaker* is the obvious example. A slight revision of *The Merchant of Yonkers,* which first appeared in 1938, Wilder's comedy does not belong in this period at all. It is one of the best plays in the collection, but its quality is not necessarily the reason for its success; its long run—like that of Jan de Hartog's *The Fourposter* (an American play by a Dutch playwright?), an obvious piece of comic sentimentality—can probably be attributed to the rampant nostalgia that has recently mothered such a large crop of books and reminiscence stories about the halcyon days before World War I. Although John Van Druten's *I Am a Camera* was written in 1951, it, too, seems to belong to an earlier era, that period at the beginning of the 30's which Christopher Isherwood recreated in his *Berlin Stories,* the play's source.

The three contemporary comedies have little in common except their inadequacies. George Axelrod's *The Seven Year Itch,* the best of the three, is a fantasy farce about the reluctant infidelity of a young husband. Ira Levin's *No Time for Sergeants,* expanded from a television adaptation of Mac Hyman's best-selling novel, is the familiar triumph of the naive country boy over city sophisticates, this time in an army setting with all of the customary army jokes. A similar kind of victory is celebrated in *The Solid Gold Cadillac,* by George S. Kaufman, out of Howard Teichmann; in this case four financial manipulators are bested by a sweet little old lady. The comic psychiatrist, the most recent addition to the galaxy of farce characters, a late variation on the quack doctor and the absent-minded professor, turns up in two of the plays, but he and the rest of the familiar farce stereotypes—particularly in the Levin and the Kaufman-Teichmann plays—are drawn as broadly as the jokes in the syndicated "Grin and Bear It" cartoon. There is very little genuine satirical material in any of the plays. *The Solid Gold Cadillac* is potentially more powerful than either of the others, but it has more targets than a rifle range and as a result its social comment loses force in dispersion.

NOT only the social comedy, but the social play itself seems to have disappeared from the American stage. Michael V. Gazzo's *A Hatful*

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of Rain, a play about dope addiction (the favorite subject of the 50's), might have been a thesis play twenty years ago; today it is a family play. The two genuinely social plays in the volume appear to have strayed in from other eras. *Inherit the Wind,* by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, is an old-fashioned liberal play that tries to use a fictionalized account of the Scopes trial to make a comment on independent thinking in a conforming society; Herman Wouk's *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial* is a neo-conservative apologia for institutionalized insufficiency.

Inherit the Wind, although it makes a bid for timelessness ("It might have been yesterday. It could be tomorrow."), has enough of the surface of 1925 and enough of the black-and-white conception of morality that the adherents of Scopes certainly needed to give the appearance of a propaganda play. Matthew Harrison Brady, the William Jennings Bryan character, is a caricature, and, although Bryan himself may have been something of a caricature, the conflict of the play collapses in the face of the obvious wrong-headedness of Brady. Perhaps the choice of subject was wrong for today; the ideas of Clarence Darrow, good liberalism in the 20's, have come under question recently—not so much those of the Scopes trial, it is true, as those of the Leopold-and-Loeb defense. In any case, *Inherit the Wind* is almost as much a triumph of nostalgia as *The Fourposter*—a nostalgia, in this case, for a non-analytic decade when right and wrong, true and false, was as simple as choosing sides.

The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial is as much a period piece as *Inherit the Wind.* It belongs to the years immediately after World War II, even before the publication of Wouk's successful novel, when generals and admirals were still larger than life. The incredible reasoning that Wouk brought to the play—the idea that Queeg, who is admittedly a coward, an extortioner, and a petty tyrant, is somehow not culpable because he is a Regular Navy man—was difficult to take in 1954, when the play was on Broadway, and is even more unpalatable now. By the same logic, a brisk defense might be made for Admiral Crommelin (oh, yes, he is an anti-Semite, but he was there with the Navy when we needed him), but it might be difficult for Wouk's hero, Barney Greenwald, to make such a defense—as he did in Queeg's case—as a Jewish spokesman. I am not playing quite fair, of course, since Wouk's thesis is

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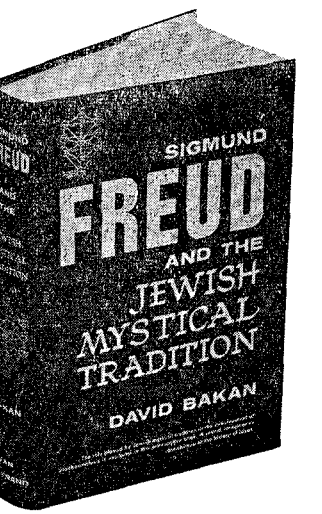

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that the Queegs are forgivable in wartime, but since the play is a postwar play its implications pass over into a world ostensibly at peace. Although the play's reverence for the Navy seemed old-fashioned even as the play appeared, two elements in it are more typical of the early 50's. One is the anti-intellectualism that lies behind making the novelist the real guilty party; the other is the plea for conformity that is implied in Greenwald's "there's a time for everything, including rebellious youth."

If *Inherit the Wind* and *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial* make an interesting ideational contrast, they are comparable in many ways. The success of the two plays, I suspect, did not lie in their ideas at all. They are both courtroom plays in which a villain, or at least a dangerous neurotic, is broken on the witness stand in scenes of real dramatic intensity. The good guys defeat the bad guys (even though Wouk confuses things by insisting later that the bad guys are the good guys), and that particular dramatic denouement is a comforting one to audiences whatever ideas flicker around the edges of the play. Beyond that, the authors of both plays make conciliatory gestures toward an age of moral uncertainty. Although Brady is obviously the evil force in *Inherit the Wind,* Lawrence and Lee put a last-scene defense of him into the mouth of Henry Drummond (the Darrow character); although Queeg represents an institutional, if not a personal, goodness in *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial,* Wouk breaks him to save the innocently guilty Lt. Maryk from a possible death sentence.

It is perhaps a little odd to talk of the absence of social and political content in a volume that contains two plays by Arthur Miller. The fact is, however, that Miller—for all of his public and controversial involvement with Communism—is not a political playwright. It is hardly far-fetched to suggest that he was drawn to the subject of *The Crucible* by his own battles with Congressional investigating committees. Had the play been no more than his answer to the investigators, it would have died with the disappearance of the conditions that helped bring it to birth. After an initial failure on Broadway—which may have been partly the result of a suspicion that the play was an argument in a personal quarrel of its author—*The Crucible* has become a staple of college drama groups, has had a successful off-Broadway revival this year, and has been made into a movie in France. The play is the drama of one man, John Proctor, whose greatest struggle is facing himself, not his accusers; like most of Miller's work it is about personal identity and integrity in the face of a social situation which seems to demand a particular pattern of behavior. The play, which certainly grew out of Miller's political difficulties, is personal rather than political or propagandistic. In *A View from the Bridge,* there is little left but an echo of the old struggle. Although Eddie dies because he turns informer, the death is merely a mechanistic device, like a falling rock or a pistol shot; his tragic difficulty is psychological, not political. On stage at least, Miller has always been much more a child of Freud than of Marx.

THE five remaining plays—Tennessee Williams's *The Rose Tattoo* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,* William Inge's *Picnic* and *Bus Stop,* and Robert Anderson's *Tea and Sympathy*—have much in common. They *are* the American drama of the 50's. They share a reputation for honesty and integrity; on closer look, they share a certain speciousness. Harold Clurman once used the phrase "lyric realism" to describe *Picnic;* he might have used it for any of the five plays. The realism is only apparent, an attempt to portray the emotional life of men with carefully documented psychologizing. In *Picnic,* for instance, Inge is not content to present Hal Carter's insecurity dramatically (as he is that of the heroine); he must let his hero explain all about his childhood. The result is an infusion of sociology and psychology in a play that is otherwise a simple and rather touching love story. The psychology of all these plays is necessarily over-simplified, but if it were not carried like a banner and beat like a drum, the audience could forget that this is the age of the textbook and reach its own conclusions about motivation on the basis of the dramatic action alone. The realism in this case is nothing more than excessive explicitness. The lyricism is even more difficult to discover. There is nothing verbally lyric about any of these playwrights. In one sense, the situations—at least in *The Rose Tattoo* and *Picnic*—might be said to be lyric, but I suspect that *lyric,* here, refers simply to a vague and soft-edged atmosphere that hovers over all these plays—the realistic seen through a scrim darkly.

Perhaps a better word to describe the five plays would be *romantic.* All the plays are

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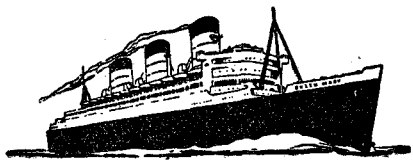
about love or, more properly, sex. That they discuss sex so openly and so insistently and in all its ramifications cannot obscure the fact that essentially the sex of these plays is bathed in a breathless naivety. It even becomes therapeutic. In *Tea and Sympathy,* Laura Reynolds cures the young man's inferiority and self-doubt, incredibly, by sleeping with him. At the end of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,* at least in the version used on Broadway (both third acts are printed in this volume), there is the suggestion that Maggie the Cat will save Brick once she gets him to bed with her. Sex is frankly mystical in *The Rose Tattoo,* a play in which the rose symbol runs as wild as plantain on a summer lawn, where Serafina Delle Rose feels burning on her breast the rose tattoo of her lover in the moment of conception. In *Picnic* Madge decides to follow Hal Carter to Tulsa and in *Bus Stop* Cherie decides to go with Bo Decker to his Montana ranch, proving once again that love (i.e., sex) conquers all.

To do the playwrights justice they know that solutions are not so simple as they appear in these plays. In the original version of *Picnic,* Madge did not follow Hal. The new ending was added—apparently at the suggestion of the director, Joshua Logan—supposedly because audiences would prefer a "happy" curtain. In the original version of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* Brick only agreed to try to give Maggie a child because she was forcing him to do so by withholding his liquor; Elia Kazan, the play's director, insisted on the change. The revisions, however, do no violence to the plays; they are atmospherically heading toward those endings all the time. It is significant that the directors —incidentally the two directors who have had the greatest influence on the whole romantic-psychological school of play writing and acting —should have helped shape the final form of these plays. Robert Sherwood once had the reputation for being a playwright who knew what the audiences on Broadway wanted before they themselves did. Williams, Inge, and Anderson have inherited this talent—at least for the 50's. They discuss sex frankly in a way that gives the audience both titillation and a sense of being very grown-up. They stir in a healthy helping of sardonic or pathetic comedy. They cap it all with one of the two sentimental endings that are as old as show business: either boy-meets-girl (*The Rose Tattoo, Picnic, Bus Stop*) or the-love-of-a-good-woman (*Tea and*



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Sympathy, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof). By comparison, *A Moon for the Misbegotten,* O'Neill's fifteen-year-old play that got into this volume on the strength of its recent Broadway presentation, seems much more awkward; it also seems much more honest in the treatment of its theme. Williams, Inge, and Anderson are in a way the spiritual children of O'Neill, the first American playwright to use standard psychology with such leaden specificity, but somehow—even when a play of his is talkative and tiresome as much of *Moon* is—he seems to cut much more deeply into human emotions than do his slicker descendants.

There are two other interesting elements which turn up in the plays of Williams, Miller, and Anderson. The first is the resurrection of the old Anglo-Saxon myth of the fiery Mediterranean peoples in *The Rose Tattoo* and *A View from the Bridge*. The second, and much more important, is the use of the homosexual as a symbol of the non-conformist. In *Tea and Sympathy* (Anderson does milk all possibilities) you get the non-conforming heterosexual accused of homosexuality by the conforming latent homosexual. In *A View from the Bridge* and, even more, in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, the theme is treated less obviously; in both plays the hero suspects himself of an attraction that he cannot admit because it is not societally acceptable; the suspicion leads Eddie to the act that brings his own death and Brick to alcoholism as an escape. Part of the reason for the use of the homosexual, real or suspected, as the non-conformist symbol lies in the near-absence of social ideas in the plays of the 50's.

The new Gassner collection—like his earlier ones—is useful as a picture of American drama over a specific period. It is, however, a little saddening. Of the comedies, only *The Matchmaker* is of more than momentary interest. The serious plays are not much more rewarding. The weaknesses of Tennessee Williams and William Inge become increasingly apparent on re-reading and their values, largely theatrical, get lost on the page; Robert Anderson's *Tea and Sympathy*, once highly praised as an important play, is unmasked as an essay in slickness. Only Arthur Miller's plays retain a solidity on the page and even his—particularly *A View from the Bridge*—display the perennial weakness of American playwrights—an infelicity with words. Gassner's group portrait is an accurate one; it is just not very attractive.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

WILLIAM V. SHANNON, Washington columnist for the New York *Post*, is co-author, with Robert S. Allen, of *The Truman Merry-Go-Round* (1950).

WALTER KAUFMANN is professor of philosophy at Princeton. His recently published *Critique of Religion and Philosophy* will be reviewed in an early issue of COMMENTARY.

DAN JACOBSON is himself a novelist; his most recent book was *The Price of Diamonds*.

MARSHALL SKLARE reviewed Will Herberg's *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* in our February 1956 number. He is the author of *Conservative Judaism*.

GERALD WEALES now teaches at the University of Pennsylvania. Critical pieces by him on the movies and the theater have appeared in previous issues.

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